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The Shape of Things

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THE "REFORM" BOARD OF THE NEW YORK Stock Exchange elected last May has been widely advertised as a vigorous wielder of the new broom, but the circumstances under which Robert M. Hutchins has resigned as one of its "public representatives" suggests that it has inherited from its predecessors a fondness for the whitewash brush. With Mr. Hutchins a lone dissenter, the board decided to take no action with regard to establishing the responsibility of those members who had knowledge of the state of Richard Whitney's affairs prior to his suspension. That certain members had adhered to the "code of gentlemen" when public interest demanded they break silence was clearly indicated by the report of the SEC. By its decision not to pursue the matter further on the ground that it would merely duplicate the investigation of the SEC, the board seems to condone that silence. According to a commentator in the New York *Herald Tribune,* Wall Street opinion is inclined to regard the consequent resignation of Mr. Hutchins as an "ultimate benefit," since he lacked "understanding of market problems." In the context of the case this can only mean inability to make a subtle distinction between business morality and everyday ethics. We congratulate Mr. Hutchins on this disqualification.

*

PRIVATE COLLECTIVISM IS NO NEW DEAL bugaboo. One sees its vivid outlines in the monopoly-inquiry testimony on the glass industry, in which one company, Hartford-Empire, through its control of basic patents, dictates policies as completely as any commissar in a Soviet trust. This one company and a related concern accounted for more than 96 per cent of all glass containers manufactured in 1937. The rest was divided among "independents." The word is put in quotation marks because Hartford-Empire tells its supposed competitors how much they may produce, what kind of glassware they may manufacture, in what territory they may sell, with whom they may do business, and the conditions under which they may use machinery not patented by Hartford-Empire. Litigation is used as a deliberate instrument of business

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policy against recalcitrant inventors or independent business men. Hartford-Empire has made millions on the basic patent it acquired in 1917 for $2,300; in 1937 it earned 67.77 per cent on net capital employed in operations. The life of patents is limited by law to seventeen years, but loopholes revealed by the inquiry will permit Hartford-Empire to have the use of its chief patents for fifty-four years. One of the devices to circumvent the seventeen-year restriction is to keep one's application for a patent pending as long as possible—the application keeps others out of the field. Testimony from the automobile industry showed that the original Selden patent on the motor car was kept pending for seventeen years. Fortunately it was broken in the courts in 1911, and Detroit is remarkably free from the patent monopoly. It is worth noting that while a Congressional committee is uncovering these evils the Supreme Court—over the protests of the new liberal minority, Black and Reed—has this year widened both the scope and duration of patents.

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PHILIP MUSICA'S AMAZING IMPERSONATION, for seventeen years, of F. Donald Coster, ranks as one of the greatest feats of acting in history. There was an artistic completeness about the performance which compels admiration. Nor can one regret that shot in the bathroom which, conventional though it was, proved the exactly right curtain to a drama which pales the most expert efforts of our thriller merchants. At present we have actually witnessed only the last act, and we await eagerly the unfolding of the complete plot. There are hints that it includes gun-running and bootlegging in addition to purely financial skulduggery. We hope that the multitudinous government agencies which are taking a hand in the investigations will not get in one another's light. The public must be given the whole story, which has, we suspect, apart from its entertainment value, some pretty serious morals attached to it.

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CHANGES IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT recommended by the Advisory Council on Social Security are excellent so far as they go. Government participation in the financing of social insurance has proved necessary and successful in most countries. Broadening the coverage of the old-age-annuity plan to include farm employees, domestic servants, and workers in non-profit, religious, and charitable institutions is desperately needed. The proposals for widows' and orphans' benefits and the supplementary allowance for aged wives are equally vital, as is the recommendation for the payment of disability benefits regardless of age. On these latter proposals, however, the Advisory Council appears to have been unnecessarily cautious. Wives are not to receive an allowance unless they are sixty-five years of age, regardless of their husband's age or capacity for work. Thus elderly wives of aged husbands are left very much in the lurch until they reach the stated age. Similarly, it is to be regretted that the Advisory Council did not come out flatly for immediate protection for workers who are disabled before they reach sixty-five. As the council itself points out, "No other group in our population is more completely dependent or in a more desperate economic situation." Equally regrettable are the many omissions in the report. No provision is made, for example, for eliminating the fantastic reserve principle behind the old-age-insurance plan, though the added benefits may serve to reduce the reserve somewhat, or for correcting the glaring weaknesses in the unemployment-insurance scheme.

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THE FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION has been doing good work in a field where private enterprise has not yet recovered from its excesses during the boom years. We are therefore glad that the President has used his powers under the National Housing Act to raise the maximum of insured mortgages from two to three billion dollars. By insuring mortgages of up to 90 per cent of value on medium-priced houses the FHA has paved the way for a revival in building of this type. Its mode of operations gives the intending home builder real protection against jerry-building, while by cutting out second and third mortgages and providing for regular amortization it diminishes the risks of home ownership. Competition among the savings banks and other large holders of funds to obtain insured mortgages has been growing, with the result that initial charges have been much reduced. Basic interest rates, however, are still as high as 4½ to 5 per cent. With federal insurance making these mortgages almost the equivalent of government bonds yielding 3 per cent or less, the question arises whether too high a premium is not being paid for the cooperation of the financial institutions. It is also important to remember that the FHA, while doing admirable work, is not able to contribute to the urgently necessary task of rehousing that "one-third of the nation" most in need of better accommodation. The group to which it especially caters is that able to afford a rent of around $50 a month. Hence while applauding the President's decision to extend its resources, we must ask whether proportionate attention is being given to really low-cost housing. We call attention to the article by Charles Abrams on another page which deals with various aspects of the fight for adequate housing.

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AT LAST THE NAZIS HAVE GONE TOO FAR IN expressing their complete contempt for the British government. When they seized Austria, Mr. Chamberlain talked appeasement; when by threats of force they compelled Britain and France to sacrifice the Czechs, he talked appeasement; when they violated the Munich

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agreement before the ink on it was dry, he talked appeasement; when they loosed their mobs on the Jews and followed physical terror with financial extortion, he still talked appeasement. But even a Chamberlain will turn, and the limit of his patience was reached when the German press was ungentlemanly enough to refer to the venerable Earl Baldwin as a "guttersnipe." This epithet moved the Premier to protest, whereupon the Nazis underlined their caddishness by discourteously boycotting the dinner at which his speech was made. Such behavior has drawn a solemn rebuke from the London *Times*, Mr. Chamberlain has gone so far, for him, as to ask in the obsequious tones he reserves for the Nazi gangsters for a "sign" that they want peace, and there are indications that even the Cliveden set is beginning to wonder whether work on the Berlin-London axis ought not to be indefinitely suspended.

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THE CRY OF CHILDREN IN DISTRESS HAS NOT often gone unheeded in this country. After the war both Congress and individual Americans assisted generously the victims of the blockade. When the Russian famine threatened ten million children in 1921, there was no hesitation in going to their aid. But today there is a cry for help which is going unanswered. In Germany there are 60,000 outcast children, of whom half are Christians, threatened by starvation and subjected to moral terror. Britain has offered to care for 15,000 of them; little Holland for 5,000. Surely America will not look the other way. We appeal to the President and to Mr. Hoover, who whatever their differences share a common humanitarianism, to join in proposing to Congress an amendment to the law which would permit at least 10,000 of these children to enter outside the quota. Funds for their support and foster-parents willing to care for them are already assured. And we know that the people of America, a land built by immigrants, would respond with a generous "Yes!" to a proposal that refuge be given to 10,000 innocents. It needs only to be made.

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NAZI HENS HAVE BEEN FORMALLY TOLD IN the *Berliner Tageblatt* that they must lay 140 eggs yearly in spite of short rations. (We had been wondering who reads the *Tageblatt.*) Those who fail will get it in the neck. A rooster who prides himself on his resemblance to Josef Goebbels plans to open the campaign by leading a contingent of willing Aryan hens down the Wilhelmstrasse. At a given signal they will lay fresh eggs at the feet of Adolf Hitler as they cluck the slogan, *Kirche, Küche, Kinder*. . . . A German court has ruled that paintings and pictures of Nazi leaders may not be attached for debt. The ruling was made in the case of a German who wanted to keep a painting of Hermann Göring that he had won in a shooting gallery. Which reminds us of the English diplomat who, when Göring said he had been on a shooting trip, asked innocently, "Humans?" . . . In another ward of the European insane asylum: The Grand Duke Vladimir emptied Paris of taxis when he called a meeting of Russian monarchists, who greeted him as "Czar of all the Russias." Well, not quite all. . . . One Huaracha Cuchicela has suggested to the Lima conference the restoration of the Inca empire in Peru. He claims the title of "Only Inca." The suggestion has presumably been referred to a committee, which is expected to take no action promptly.

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FREDERICK B. ROBINSON'S RESIGNATION AS president of the City College of New York is his most important contribution to the advance of education in a long and reactionary career. His administration was as intolerant as it was inept; it won for him the contempt of his profession and the scorn of conservatives and liberals alike. When such distinguished liberals as Ordway Tead and John T. Flynn were appointed to the Board of Higher Education, it became clear that Robinson's days were numbered. His successor should profit from his extraordinary but far too long-drawn-out demonstration of how *not* to run a college.

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TO WILLIAM MACDONALD, WHO DIED LAST week in New York, belongs the credit of having written the most remarkable editorial which appeared in *The Nation* in the post-war period. It was called The Madness at Versailles, and appeared on May 17, 1919, immediately after the publication of the peace treaty. At the time it was considered a crazy performance, for the press of the country was then ready to accept President Wilson's assurance that the peace treaty was all that it should be. Mr. MacDonald rightly declared that it divided the world into two camps and that it opened up a new battle "to make man free." Today, however, after nearly twenty years, the liberal, peace-loving forces stand with their backs to the wall. As for Woodrow Wilson, the editorial correctly prophesied that "his rhetorical phrases, torn and faded tinsel of a thought which men now doubt if he himself ever really believed, will never again fall with hypnotic charm upon the ears of eager multitudes." This was only one of William MacDonald's distinguished services to this journal as European correspondent, editorial writer, and first editor of the International Relations Section, which for several years dealt at length with foreign problems. He was an admirable teacher of history at Bowdoin College and Harvard and Brown universities, a meticulously careful historian, and a journalist and book reviewer of erudition and distinction. *The Nation* records with sorrow this loss to American letters and acknowledges with gratitude its lasting indebtedness to William MacDonald.

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Wall Street's Fascist Wing

THE business community seems to be dividing into two camps. One is prepared to reconcile itself to the New Deal, to compromise with it, and to work within the framework of our democratic system to modify or sabotage its reforms. The other seems to be growing not less but more intransigent, fiercely class-conscious, aware of its kinship with fascist forces abroad, and ready to consider the same methods at home. This division among American capitalists is reflected politically in the battle now going on within the Republican Party between its standpatters and its (mild, very mild) liberals. In the field of journalism the same cleavage finds expression. The Chicago *Tribune* and the New York *Herald Tribune* may serve as illustrations of how far apart in spirit and outlook the two wings of anti-New Deal conservatism can become. The former is pro-Munich in its foreign policy and indefatigably the red-baiter at home; the latter regards "appeasement" as illusory and is as outspoken as any liberal paper in its defense of civil liberties. In the field of business itself the Congress of American Industry exemplified the tendency toward conciliation. Two recent events in New York City are examples of the other current, and indicate how bitter the diehards are becoming. One was the luncheon given Congressman Dies by the New York State Economic Council. The other was the sixty-sixth annual meeting of the New York Board of Trade.

We think these two gatherings merit the attention of thoughtful people the country over, but with the exception of the *Daily Worker* even the New York press printed only partial accounts. Fear of giving publicity to certain fascist organizers, a belief that dangers can best be fought by pretending that they do not exist, and a dread of offending important business advertisers combined to keep the whole picture from the public.

The list of the sponsors of the Dies luncheon and of their guests indicates that the Texan is no publicity-seeking clown to leaders of American business and finance; apparently they take his "revelations" seriously and appreciate, as well they may, the work he did in the last election to undermine his own party. The New York State Economic Council is one of the chief sounding boards for big business in this state, and its president, Merwin K. Hart, recently returned from rebel Spain full of enthusiasm for Franco. He has accused the President of "communizing the United States," and he signed the recent round robin against lifting the embargo on shipments to Spain. Guests at his luncheon included such business men as Major General Harbord of RCA, Thomas H. McInnerney of the National Dairy Products Corporation, William C. Dickerman of the American Locomotive Company, and Louis K. Comstock, head of the powerful Merchants' Association, as well as such professional patriots as Captain John B. Trevor of the American Coalition of Patriotic Societies, Archibald E. Stevenson, and Fritz Kuhn. Congressman Dies referred to the Bund as "founded on racial hatred" and coupled it with communism among the forces threatening America, but these passing references we are sure did not spoil the pleasure that Kuhn and his party of Nazis derived from the rest of his speech. The guest list shows how respectable the crackpots of the right are becoming.

But the Dies luncheon pales beside the Board of Trade affair, where the main speaker was Major General George Van Horn Moseley, a military nobody who has been trying to be a man on horseback ever since his retirement in September. He signalized his retirement by a statement attacking the New Deal which Secretary Woodring attributed to pique over his failure to become Chief of Staff. On Armistice Day he made an anti-Semitic speech before the National Christian Convention in Cincinnati. General Moseley himself is unimportant, and the speech he made in New York might be dismissed as too irresponsible to merit attention had he not been addressing one of the city's representative business bodies. He proposed that we accede to a Japanese "Monroe Doctrine" in the Far East, pleaded for better relations with the axis powers, sneered at the new national-defense program and the effort to unite with Latin America against fascist aggression, and called for the extermination of "domestic enemies." The domestic enemies he identified as the New Dealers "and here and there their wives," and the extermination he meant literally. He warned that "Christian patriotic groups are demanding immediate action . . . once these patriots go to battle they will cure the disease definitely and make those massacres now recorded in history look like peaceful church parades." General Göring himself could not have surpassed his appeal to the America outside New York City and the District of Columbia: "In fact, if both New York and Washington were burned down tonight it would not cause a ripple in the America that I am talking about. In fact, in Washington it might be one definite way of reducing bureaucracy." The Board of Trade applauded.

Meetings of this kind attended by those who have a great deal of money and power illustrate how real the threat of fascism may soon become. They also demonstrate that those who are worried about appeals to violence, class prejudice, and un-American ideas should keep their eyes on Wall Street, not on Union Square.

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Snags at Lima

DISPATCHES from Lima in the past few days make it clear that things are not going at all well for the program of the American delegation. It is true that the first official act of the conference was to adopt unanimously a resolution, favored by Secretary Hull, committing the Americas to liberal trade policies. But such resolutions have been adopted before, and have offered no barrier to the penetration of the regimented trade policies of the totalitarian states. It is also true that the United States succeeded in sidetracking Chile's proposal outlawing diplomatic intervention for the recovery of confiscated or expropriated property. But this again was a rather hollow victory, for the fact still remains that any such action by the United States would be deeply resented throughout Latin America.

These paper triumphs have been offset, moreover, by the persistent opposition of the Argentine delegation to the proposals advanced by the United States on continental solidarity. The failure of Hull's draft "Declaration of Lima" to win general support at the conference is the more discouraging because of its comparative mildness. It fell far short of establishing an "American League of Nations." It was not even a multilateral pact of mutual assistance for the American nations. It sought merely to set up machinery to put into effect the consultative provisions of the convention signed at Buenos Aires on December 23, 1936.

Argentina's suspicion that the proposals for continental solidarity may be merely another device for furthering North American imperialism was not lessened by Alfred M. Landon's explicit reaffirmation of the Monroe Doctrine. Although his speech may have salutary effects on the totalitarian dictatorships in Europe, it sounded far too much like the statements of past Republican leaders to reassure countries which are disturbed lest the Good Neighbor policy have a two-year time limit. Mr. Landon's failure to suppport the Good Neighbor policy explicitly, in the name of the Republican Party, must have caused very real alarm to the Latin Americans.

Some sort of compromise between the Argentine and the North American position on the question of continental solidarity will doubtless be worked out before the conference closes. Just what it will be is difficult to predict, though it will presumably be along the lines of the proposal of the Brazilian delegation. While this represents some slight advance on the Buenos Aires convention, it offers little, if any, protection against the influx of totalitarian ideas and practices and provides wholly inadequate machinery for collective resistance to armed invasion. It is to be hoped that the rather disappointing legal results of the conference will be supplemented by definite gains in good-will and understanding between the United States and the Latin American republics. Such results, in the long run, will do far more to preserve democracy in the Americas than any resolutions that could possibly have been adopted.

Nazi Blackmail

DR. SCHACHT, who although no longer Minister of Economics remains Hitler's favorite emissary when any financial sleight of hand is required, has just returned to Berlin after an "unofficial visit" to London. His mission, it would appear, had at least three objectives. He was to explore the possibility of using the miseries of the refugees as a lever to boost German exports; he was to find out how seriously the British government intended to pursue its "trade-war" plans; finally he was to make preliminary soundings about a further reduction in the foreign-debt service.

Each of these questions is immediately related to Germany's foreign-trade position, and their urgency can best be appreciated by reference to the November trade figures. These reveal a very serious deterioration by comparison both with October and with a year ago. Exports in November were 8 per cent under those for the previous month, and while imports also declined the adverse balance mounted. For the nine months of the current year the excess of imports amounts to almost 400,000,000 marks, whereas last year there was an export surplus of 422,000,000. These figures are immediately important, showing as they do the strain on the weakest link in the German economic chain—foreign trade. The mounting deficit means a rapid exhaustion of foreign-exchange reserves and the necessity of cutting down imports still further. Hitler will be obliged to ask for a further tightening of belts, for, as he recently admitted, the limits of food production inside the country have been reached.

Still more alarming for the Nazis is the fact that unless they can replenish supplies of foreign exchange by increasing exports, they must reduce imports of raw materials vital to the armament factories. How serious they consider the situation is indicated by a report mentioned in the London *Economist* that production for export countries with unrestricted currencies has recently been given priority even over military requirements.

It is against this background that we must consider the proposition which Dr. Schacht is reported to have presented to George Rublee, director of the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees, for assisting the emigration of the Jews. The exact mechanism to be adopted remains obscure. According to one version, Jews leaving Germany would be permitted to take with them a small fraction of their wealth in the form of certificates only exchangeable against German goods. Another suggests that the method employed would be an international

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loan, based on the security of such refugee assets in Germany as the Nazis decide not to steal outright, which would be gradually liquidated through the sale abroad of German goods additional to normal exports. Whatever the actual means proposed, the end is clear enough. It is to play on the humanitarian sympathies of foreign peoples and governments in order to bolster Germany's weak trade position.

Stripped of its trappings the scheme is nothing less than a demand for mass ransom—a demand just as monstrous as the attempts which have been made to force relatives and friends abroad to buy the release of individuals. It is an attempt to apply on an unprecedented scale the methods of the kidnapper. Hard though it may be to reject a straw which seems to offer the faintest hope to those in dire distress, *The Nation* believes that any plan involving ransom, however disguised, should be unhesitatingly rejected. If from humanitarian motives we consent to be blackmailed, we merely encourage the blackmailer to repeat his tactics on Catholics, Protestants, or other vulnerable groups. We nullify the pressure that has been put on the Nazis by the trade boycott—and how real that pressure is the trade figures show—and we demonstrate to gangsters and would-be gangsters the world over that terror is a clever financial trick.

We cannot believe that any organization interested in helping refugees, whether Jewish, Christian, or nonsectarian, will give the slightest countenance to a ransom scheme. We rejoice that the joint boycott council of the American Jewish Congress and the Jewish Labor Committee has rejected flatly Dr. Schacht's plans and heartily indorse its proposals for an intensification of the boycott. To Hitler's attempts to exploit the miseries of the refugees in order to feed his military Moloch there is only one answer to be made: "Millions for relief but not one cent for tribute."

Help for China

ANNOUNCEMENT that the Import-Export Bank is prepared to advance credits to finance the export of American products to China, which has now been followed by the decision to continue the extension of credit to China against gold held in this country, is heartening news. The amount of the credit is small in comparison with the need, but shipment of $25,000,000 worth of trucks, gasoline, and machinery will be of great aid to China in its desperate struggle. Responsible observers have been almost unanimous in asserting that China needs two things above all else if it is to hold out against Japan: (1) mechanical transport facilities to give its armies the mobility possessed by the Japanese; and (2) an industrial base in the vast western areas still under Chinese control. These credits should be of substantial assistance in achieving both objectives.

The political significance of the two decisions is even greater. For the first time in years the United States has taken the lead in an important move to check aggression. Action by the United States should spur Great Britain and other countries which have been considering similar advances to China. At the same time it serves as a warning to Japan that the outside world does not fully concur in its ambition to dominate the Asiatic continent.

Announcement of the credits has come at a particularly opportune moment because it is evident that in the past few weeks China itself has found new defensive resources. Recent reports tell of Chinese triumphs in all sections of the country. Only about a fortnight ago the Eighth Route Army won one of the great victories of the war in Shansi. Chinese guerrilla units are reported to be operating on the outskirts of Shanghai. In Central China the Chinese regular army has recovered virtually all the territory it lost in the preceding month. A counter-offensive now under way in South China has recaptured the port of Waichow and carried the Chinese to the outskirts of Canton. Most significant of all is the announcement that Chiang Kai-shek has officially adopted the guerrilla and mass-warfare tactics favored by the Eighth Route Army, and is taking action to free the government of defeatist elements. This implies a new unity between the right- and left-wing elements in the government. It also implies greater cooperation between China and the Soviet Union, which should be definitely beneficial for China.

Nothing could be more disastrous, however, than for the United States to assume that in advancing the $25,000,000 in credits it has discharged its obligation to China. Realism is sadly needed at this point. It is distinctly not good business to lend money and then proceed to assist an enemy to destroy the security for the loan. Yet the fact is that the United States is pursuing at the moment just such contradictory policies. With one hand it is lending China $25,000,000. With the other it is furnishing Japan with more than half of the war materials necessary to continue its invasion of that country and, through purchases of silk and other Japanese products, providing some $125,000,000 annually to be used for buying war supplies. Thus our positive influence, from an economic standpoint, is still definitely on the side of Japan.

China has shown amazing courage and tenacity in holding out against a powerfully mechanized Japanese army for nearly a year and a half. But it cannot hold out indefinitely if the economic resources of countries like the United States and Britain continue to work predominantly on the side of Japan. In the interest of realism and justice the President should utilize his power under Section 338 of the Tariff Act to ban Japanese imports, and Congress should push through the proposed embargo on all war materials to the aggressor nations.

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Housing Opposition: New Style

BY CHARLES ABRAMS

WHEN Congress convenes in January, the spotlight will be thrown on the government's low-rent housing program, and the lion will be seen cavorting with the lamb. In the past year the small group of public-housing supporters has been joined by a host of new cronies—industrialists, builders, and suppliers of materials, Democrats and Republicans, members of real-estate boards, and an unclassified array of individuals who refer to themselves as housing experts. The capital's hotel lobbies have been sibilant with talk of specifications, subsidies, slums, and costs; architects, contractors, and salesmen have haunted the scene, all seeking their share of the $828,000,000 housing purse. The slum dweller's cause has burgeoned into big business and with it into big-time politics.

Today there are evidences of a hard road ahead for housing. Opposition and approval have in many instances become indistinguishable. While there are still some who frankly view with alarm all forms of government intervention as paternalistic or useless, the really menacing opposition is more subtle. It works either by impeding basic legislation with restrictive amendments or by attempting to gain control of the housing administration by the pretense of sympathetic interest.

The difficulties inherent in the program itself, together with the public's unfamiliarity with the technical problems of its administration, have reinforced criticism and opposition; and obscure but well-sounding proposals for its modification have often taken on the force of irrefutable logic. Of course mistakes were inevitable in the early days, and numerous enough to make excellent copy. Costs were high and delays endless, for a ponderous bureaucratic mechanism creaks a bit as it gets under way. The field was a new one, much energy was dissipated on minor issues, and by the time a federal housing administrator had started to work himself in, he was already on the way out. From Robert Kohn to Horatio Hackett to A. R. Clas to Howard Gray and finally to Nathan Straus—these were the changes within four years.

Under Straus the policy that had accounted for much of the difficulty was changed: housing administration was decentralized, and responsibility was placed with the local authorities, where it belonged. Favorable sentiment developed rapidly throughout the country; within a year local housing authorities were established in more than 225 cities, and the movement which had started as a minor part of a temporary works program grew overnight into a generally accepted and permanent social policy. For a time it seemed as if anyone who dared oppose slum clearance thereby declared himself in favor of disease, poverty, and crime.

But there were always those who waited for the opportunity to discredit and, if possible, to destroy housing legislation. The lines of attack now being developed conform to no one pattern, for housing's many enemies differ sharply in motivation and background. Moreover, the enormous power wielded by the Housing Administrator has from the outset caused much concern. The creation of an independent agency, though designed primarily to keep housing from political entanglements, has never received the whole-hearted blessing of many whose opinions are audible in influential circles.

In addition to these retarding factors, Mr. Straus does not make friends easily. Nor has he always employed the greatest tact and political wisdom in dealing with a situation he felt to be essentially non-political. Possibly he has placed too much emphasis on successful administration and too little on the things that matter politically when a Congress convenes. On the day of his appointment it looked as though his housing career would be as short-lived as that of his predecessors. No sooner had he been nominated than he was haled before a Senate committee. He had been in office less than a month when he was accused of delays. Nevertheless, Straus survived all attacks creditably, and is now in a position to get things done. The future of the slum dweller finally begins to look brighter.

In one year the United States Housing Authority has completed the enormous task of organizing the administration, establishing its policy, obtaining local legislation, and learning to deal with a multitude of new and inexpert agencies that had to build huge housing developments for the first time. Decentralization meant adjustment of federal policy to the laws of three dozen states and to the circumstances of hundreds of cities with their varying climates, building methods, and costs.

In many cities housing authorities were even without funds to defray the necessary expenses of preparing their applications, for the centralizing policy of the Housing Division of PWA had left hardly half a dozen agencies still equipped to proceed. Yet in a single year the total amount of the available funds has been applied for and allotted, contracts have been signed for projects in seventy-five communities involving more than $320,000,000, and forty-five actual advances have been made to thirty agencies. The contracts provide for the rehousing of

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64,451 families at monthly rentals ranging from $2 to $5.18 per room. The income groups to be reached range from families earning $400 a year to those in larger cities with an average income of $1,100. Local opposition to tax exemption, which so retarded PWA housing, has been overcome, and though the minimum requirements for local cooperation have been fixed by statute at only 20 per cent of the federal contribution, local contributions actually average 73 per cent.

Considering that it takes about a year for the average large private construction operation to proceed from the site-selection to the steam-shovel stage, the achievements of the USHA form a remarkable record. But the Straus performance has nevertheless been a hard one to put across to the public. It would have been comparatively easy to convince the average citizen that bad housing is a menace to health; the education of the public with respect to earmarkings, cost figures, and specifications is something else. Moreover, the housing movement has never had any support comparable, for instance, to that given to the labor movement, the prohibition movement, or even the Townsend movement. The support it has received has been mixed, uncertain, unorganized, and leaderless, the kind that was certain to give way before the first really energetic encroachment. This now seems to threaten. Present funds are nearly exhausted, and Congress must act to replenish them if the program is to be continued. It is at this point that criticism and opposition can become most effective.

The simultaneous appearance of many articles on housing in widely circulated magazines and syndicated columns on the very eve of the approaching session is something more than simple coincidence. Some of the authors have been unwitting parties to a plan to undermine one of the most essential social movements in our history. Despite Straus's extraordinary record, there is a strong tendency to identify him with the shortcomings of his predecessors. By one critic Straus is nominated for decapitation; others suggest as an alternative the decapitation of the program itself. The building and loan associations, whose supporters are strongly represented in the lower house, have organized local opposition, and in a few cities federal assistance for housing projects has even been rejected. The National Association of Real Estate Boards has advocated the provision of minimum facilities only and limitation of operations to slum clearance. A campaign is being organized to amend the federal statute to restrict administrative discretion.

Most important and most effective of all the attacks is the attempt to restrict local legislation. In New York State, once the spearhead of the housing movement, damage has already been done. Public opinion demanded that the federal program be supplemented by state and municipal participation, and for this a constitutional amendment was needed. What happened? Though all that was required to enable both city and state to borrow, to lend, and to spend was a simple statement to that effect, the amendment finally adopted was a mass of mechanisms, restrictions, prohibitions, and limitations for which there is no parallel in constitutional documents. It disabled more than it enabled, and what it enabled, among other things, was a picnic for private enterprise. Strange bedfellows combined to sponsor it in the Constitutional Convention. State aid was limited there to slum-clearance projects, and though everyone favors slum clearance, it is likely to prove impracticable during a period of dwelling shortage. Tearing down inhabited tenements on any large scale, as experience has shown, would intensify the shortage to such an extent that rents in adjoining areas would jump 25 per cent or more. Not only would it promote overcrowding and distress, but the increased congestion would bar further slum-clearance operations because of increased land costs. Only the owners of slum property would profit.

But that was not all. The city and state were forbidden to engage in private business, and therefore no stores could be erected in the projects. Of course this provision might also operate to increase surrounding land values by increasing the rentals of sites for stores, moving-picture houses, and other commercial enterprises. Though tenants might have to pay as much as a dollar a month more per room because of the loss of store revenues, and though logical planning dictates the erection of self-contained units, the restriction was incorporated in the amendment.

As if this were not enough, real estate was specifically exempted from local taxation for housing subsidies. The Vladeck proposal to spend 1 per cent of the budget for slum clearance is thus no longer practicable, for now special taxes would be necessary. Under the amendment little discretion is given to the housing manager in the selection of his tenants, for it is prescribed that the old residents of the area must be given preference even though the needs of other families may be more pressing.

But the *pièce de résistance* is a provision enabling public funds to be lent to private owners to repair old-law tenements. For the first time in eighty years the legislature was permitted to open the public treasury to private individuals. The old prohibition written into the laws of the state after the railroads had mulcted the treasury of millions was lifted. We may soon see government-subsidized slums, blocks of decrepit old tenements revived and perpetuated by a dash of taxpayers' insulin. Since so-called limited-dividend corporations are also enabled to borrow funds, we may also witness a flood of applications that are really attempts to bail out of land ownership at public expense. For as the PWA and the State Housing Board know, in a speculative enterprise like building few owners are willing to limit their profits to 6 per cent unless something else is gained.

While some parts of the amendment are permissive

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and legislation must be enacted to put them into effect, the victory of its ingenious sponsors is already taking form. Robert Moses, with the sanction of many influential real-estate bodies, has proposed the formula. He advocates loans of public moneys for limited-dividend corporations. Moreover, he urges that such private improvements be exempt from taxes, while low-rent projects serving slum dwellers should pay their full share of taxes. He favors immediate acquisition of slum sites by condemnation; in practice this means payment to landowners on the basis of assessed valuations rather than of real values. Tenant selection under his plan is to be made by the Welfare Commissioner, which would automatically classify tenants as objects of charity. He would scrap the present Housing Authority, designed by law to keep politics out of housing.

Mr. Moses was opposed to all public housing in 1936, but the cause is far too popular to be opposed in New York today. The strategy now is, "If you can't destroy your enemies, then join them." The housing movement in New York State has become a bandwagon which individuals with varying stakes are trying to steer in directions which favor their best interests.

The most effective opposition may be expected when the Republican Party decides on its housing policy, and much will depend on how the wind blows in the next few months. Thus far, the program has been generally favored, at least in principle; even Herbert Hoover has expressed himself in favor of slum clearance. The form the Republican plank may take is indicated by the recent gubernatorial campaign in New York. Mr. Dewey's stand, undoubtedly sponsored by state and national advisers, points to hard days ahead for the movement. Ostensibly he was for slum clearance, but the federal program to him was "an invasion of the business of the states." By inference, the federal government should stop its housing activities and Congress curtail any further appropriations. States and cities, of course, are in no position to provide the huge subsidies needed for extensive operations. With federal support withdrawn, public housing and slum clearance would again be reduced to the status of a slogan.

Nazi Spies and Franco Pirates

BY JOACHIM JOESTEN

Stockholm, Sweden, December 5

WHEN in the first days of November the Insurgent cruiser Nadir shelled and sank the Republican freighter Cantabria just off the English coast, few people seemed to realize the full import of this incident. It was not a casual or even an isolated event. Shortly afterward a Spanish government ship, pursued by a rebel trawler in the Baltic, was forced to seek refuge in Stockholm, and only a few days later another ship fled under similar circumstances into the Norwegian port of Bergen. But still some people were reluctant to see in these incidents an organized extension of the Spanish War to northern waters.

Those doubts have now been dispelled in a most dramatic manner. Conclusive evidence has come to light that the recent acts of piracy committed in the North Sea and the Baltic are the fruit of well-organized cooperation between the Insurgent fleet and a secret Nazi intelligence service in Denmark and Sweden.

On November 22 the Danish police, after careful preparations, unmasked at a stroke a widespread Nazi spy organization which during the last two years had methodically built up an effective naval and aeronautical intelligence service spanning the whole Baltic and its approaches. It appears from the ample material seized by the police that the activities of the spies had been directed primarily against British shipping. A far-flung and complex system, secretly created on Danish and Swedish soil, was ready to function as soon as a general war broke out.

In the meantime, the Spanish War offered to the plotters an excellent opportunity for exercise. Just as German guns and airplanes are now being tried out on Spanish targets, the Nazis' naval-intelligence service in North Europe set about practicing on Spanish—and Russian—merchantmen trading between North European ports and Republican Spain. A network of agents operating from every Baltic port had been formed to trace, observe, and report to the central service in Copenhagen all movements of "suspect" ships, especially through the Big Belt, the Little Belt, and the Sound. Accordingly, a large majority of the persons now under arrest were apprehended in ports, namely, in Copenhagen, Aarhus, Esberg, The Skaw, Nyborg, Korsör, Elsinore, and Rönne, on the island of Bornholm. The Swedish authorities, on their side, have disclosed that the plotters had agents in Stockholm, Malmö, Göteborg, and Hälsingborg.

Many interesting details of the gang's activities have already been divulged; others are probably still being withheld from a wider public. It operated with several secret broadcasting stations and a complex code system —one of the spies, Voigt, was caught on his way to

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Copenhagen, where he was to exchange his cipher code for a new one. It engaged in methodical research into nautical and hydrographical conditions—measuring the coastline, fathoming the waters, and so forth; a large collection of maps, charts, and drawings specially made for this purpose fell into the hands of the police. Most important for its designs was a complete signal service, and this was, incidentally, what led to the spies' unmasking. For the first suspicions were aroused when casual passers-by observed mysterious light-signals between the villa of the above-named Voigt and vessels in the Big Belt.

The most sensational aspect of the whole affair is found in the identity of the gang leaders. Out of a total of fourteen arrested up to today, no fewer than ten are Reich citizens, the rest being Danes. And among the Germans are three newspaper correspondents, all duly accredited members of the Foreign Press Association in Copenhagen. It has long been rumored that many of the Nazi correspondents in Scandinavia are not real journalists but spies and agitators in disguise. But only now has official proof of this suspicion been provided. In March, 1936, it is true, the *Völkischer Beobachter's* correspondent in Copenhagen, Ernst Schäfer, was widely accused in the Danish press of having engaged in espionage, but at the time the authorities did not take any steps against him.

Now, however, the correspondent of the Berlin *Börsen Zeitung,* organ of the Reich War Ministry, is officially accused, in a statement issued by the police, of being the leader of the spy organization that has been uncovered. He is Captain Horst von Pflugk-Hartung, the man who in 1919 killed the German Spartacist leader Karl Liebknecht. Legitimate surprise and indignation are now being expressed in Scandinavia that a man with such a past, who moreover had been expelled from Sweden for gunrunning with local Nazis, and also from Norway, could be appointed Copenhagen correspondent of a leading German newspaper. The other two Nazi journalists now under arrest are Dr. Max Rasch of the *Preussische Zeitung* and other German newspapers, and one Eduard Vogeler. It has long been a riddle why the German press, the most standardized in the world, needed to maintain in Copenhagen no fewer than ten accredited correspondents as compared with one Briton, one Frenchman, and not a single American. Today the answer is clear.

Peace on Earth

BY LOUIS FISCHER

Barcelona, November 28

WHERE shall I begin? What does it mean to be at war? Sunday morning I went to a big hospital. I walked into a room occupied by a single patient. He had shining black hair, expressionless eyes, a nose, an upper lip. Below that was a gaping red hole—the lower jaw and everything down to the gullet had been shot away in the Ebro battle. He could not talk, smile, eat, or smoke. In one ward a doctor dressed a wound. Shrapnel had torn away the soldier's nose; in its place was a pool of puss. And so on and so on. This was the division of plastic surgery. I saw photographs of men just after steel had smashed into their features—hideous creatures without cheeks, or chin, or jaw. Pictures taken a month later showed the same faces scarred forever to be sure but healed and restored to human shape. The hospital physicians performed miracles with limited materials.

Two thousand patients in this one institution. A corporal wounded at Teruel—December, 1937—still lay there helpless. A man who obviously was once big and strong had been cut down to his knees and was now learning to walk on the stumps. A specialist told me of neuroses developed by legless and armless men. The former want never to leave their beds. The latter look darkly into a future where they will have to be fed, dressed, taken to the lavatory. To see their faces one after the other, score after score, a hundred, more, tells one what men give to fight fascism.

This was the Sunday of a week in which Barcelona was bombed forty times. Wednesday morning I walked out of my hotel, coatless, to promenade on the sunny boulevard. Not a cloud. A Spanish acquaintance passed and remarked, "Good day for a raid." I was called back into the hotel to answer a telephone call. The director of a children's home was inviting me to a festival. Then she said quickly, "I must take them into the *refugio,*" and hung up. I had not heard the sirens. A group of Spaniards stood in front of the hotel; some hugged the walls. All of us watched the people on the other side of the street who from balconies, windows, and pavement were following the fascist air squadron. We could not see it. The shells of the anti-aircraft guns kept bursting high above in large bolls of cotton against the blue sky. Suddenly those opposite began to point. There was a rush across the broad Paseo de Gracia. We descried distinctly five gray bombers, one of which lagged behind. "Hit," the Spaniards yelled. "Ha! You see it cannot keep up."

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Faces burned with eagerness. I was with two British Conservatives, and I could not help comparing London's panic in September, 1938, when they thought they might be bombed, with this indifference to a danger so tangible and this sizzling desire for the destruction of the enemy after more than two years of it. The eyes of one young fellow were almost popping. He jumped every time the smoke of a shell showed anywhere near a raider. The evening's official communiqué said, "One bomber visibly lost height and speed."

Ambulances dashed by, their horns signaling madly although all other traffic is forbidden during a raid so that the special services may have the freedom of the streets. Later we coaxed a chauffeur to disobey official instructions and take us before the end of the attack to the Via Durruti, where one bomb had fallen. An officer in charge told me it weighed 200 kilograms. It had damaged buildings on both sides of the wide thoroughfare—the usual splinters of plate glass everywhere, already being swept together into heaps, crumbled masonry, blood, apartments whose front walls were on the pavement. But in one room a picture had remained in position and a dressmaker's fitting figure was whole and upright. The ladder of a fire engine rested on the third floor of a bank, and firemen were lowering the wounded to the street.

I drove to the morgue. Stretchers red with blood filled the courtyard. I went into the cellar. A woman whose stockinged feet almost touched me as I went through the door and two children of about five lay on an inclined plane. The little boy had on a polka-dotted white blouse; he was bloated and gave an almost pleasant impression of a large doll. An attendant moved his forefinger horizontally indicating that these were unclaimed victims of earlier visitors from Majorca. He led me into the next chamber. It was dimly lighted. The dead were on the stone floor. Assuming that I was in search of a relative he lit his cigarette lighter, stooped, and threw a few rays of light on the face of each dead as I moved slowly along the row of feet. Where the head was gone or the face pushed into the skull and beyond recognition he stretched out his arm to light up the body. The bodies had been laid close together, for there would be more and space must be economized, and each already had a wooden number. The last number was 39. One girl lay there almost intact as far as I could see. Her face now had a greenish pallor. She was the kind of Catalan beauty that a man will look at as she approaches and follow with his eyes as she passes. Another girl's stockingless legs had been broken below the knees and above the ankles. There was a man in a cheap brown suit, in each thigh a bright red deep saucer of flesh. An attendant in white apron entered carrying in front of him a shallow wicker basket filled with the sort of stuff the butcher throws away. That had been a human being. It was number 40.

Their relatives would not miss them until evening, for they had gone to work, or to shop, or to pay a friendly visit, or do an errand.

Outside the all-clear siren had sounded. The streets were again filled with people going about their business, smiling, flirting, bearing food bundles. The next moment any one of them could be lying in the same morgue. This must affect nerves, especially when stomachs are never full and often empty. But if Mussolini or Hitler could spend an hour in Barcelona he would know from the faces and conduct of the people that raids will not break their morale. One of the English Conservatives—he had spent three weeks with Franco last May—has since announced that that air attack made him pro-Loyalist. It makes Loyalists more pro-Loyalist. For the alternative is to love the murderers of those people stretched out in the morgue.

This raid occurred at 10:45 a.m. and lasted three minutes. At 12:40 I was in the Ministry of Economy and Finance getting an interview on the textile industry when the alarm went again. From a fourth-floor balcony I could see five giant bombers over the city and hear the distant heavy thud of falling bombs. More dead in the morgue. As the anti-aircraft shells tried to find the airplanes, two men by my side cried, "Ha! Ha!" A woman bookkeeper in black said "Oi" and returned to her desk.

A third raid took place at 7:20 p.m. One doctor in the sanitary service estimated 325 dead that day and several hundred wounded.

As I was going to bed, the guns once more started firing, and the lights went out in the hotel. During the night the anti-aircraft batteries blazed away many times, and the siren was heard so often that from bed I could not distinguish whether it heralded the beginning or the end of an attack. The next morning we were told that six raids had taken place during the night. At midnight a seaplane was shot down and fell into the sea. After breakfast they came twice again. Italian Savoias all. Eleven raids in twenty-four hours. The date was November 23, the day that Chamberlain arrived in Paris to discuss belligerent rights for Franco. It was Mussolini's way of throwing his shadow across the Paris talks: nothing could be decided about Spain without him or against him. The same day a "rebel" warship stopped the Greek freighter Mount Cynthos en route to England with a cargo of Rumanian wheat purchased by the British government. This constituted "an assumption of belligerent rights" not yet granted, the British Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs declared in the House of Commons a few days later. The piracy and the Barcelona air raids were political.

But these attacks have always had an economic aim too. For centuries Catalonia and Italy have been commercial rivals. Barcelona was the competitor of Genoa. Mussolini is trying to ruin Barcelona's trade and Cata-

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lonia's excellent industries. Here is one instance of several on which I collected concrete details: in June, 1938, according to the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the Italian Snia Viscosa, an artificial-silk corporation, purchased a site in Majorca for a rayon factory. At the small Catalan town of Blanes is an important mill which converts cellulose into rayon thread. In the course of last summer Italian bombers three times attempted to destroy this plant, which lies outside the city limits. On August 14 a fascist hydroplane dropped four 250-kilogram bombs on it. Only one exploded, but it struck the central shop and totally wrecked four of the thirty-eight machines and seriously damaged all the rest. Blanes might have competed with Majorca.

Modern bombers usually find their targets. A Latin American air attaché saw the first November 23 raid from the roof of his hotel and stated privately that the machines had dived and deliberately released their explosives on civilian sections of the capital. The following day we had no water. A few days later a bomb ripped open a gas main. On the twenty-third the SS. Wisconsin and the SS. Erica Reed, both flying the United States flag, were tied up at Barcelona quays. The Italians avoided them. This morning while I was in a store buying a necktie, there came the loud dull clap to which all ears are attuned. A woman said, "Bombas." Everybody remained calm. No one moved and no one talked. A few adults outside ran into the subway. But after five minutes, and long before the "all-clear" siren, pedestrians filled the avenues. On returning to the hotel I asked a journalist what had been hit. He said two ships. "What nationality?" I asked. He said, "Now come, British, of course."

Forty air raids in one week. Last evening I was dining with foreign officials on a special mission to Republican Spain. A page boy brought in two objects: one, part of a German bomb; the other, the time-delay fuse of a Soviet anti-aircraft shell stamped with Russian letters. Spaniards know whose guns and ammunition keep their casualties down. The knowledge helps to make politics. If the Loyalists could buy abroad for cash sufficient pursuit planes and anti-aircraft artillery, air raids would be far less costly in human lives and in crippled bodies. The international device which denies them these defensive weapons is one of the major atrocities of a cruel age. The United States arms embargo is part of that mechanism. Hands very far from this city have the blood of innocents upon them.

Living Philosophies

VII. MORALITY IN AN AGE OF CHANGE

BY W. H. AUDEN

GOODNESS is easier to recognize than to define; only the greatest novelists can portray good people. For me, the least unsatisfactory description is to say that any thing or creature is good which is discharging its proper function, using its powers to the fullest extent permitted by its environment and its own nature, though we must remember that "nature" and "environment" are intellectual abstractions from a single, constantly changing reality. Thus, people are happy and good who have found their vocation; what vocations there are will depend upon the society within which they are practiced.

There are two kinds of goodness, "natural" and "moral." An organism is naturally good when it has reached a state of equilibrium with its environment. All healthy animals and plants are naturally good in this sense. But any change toward a greater freedom of action is a morally good change. I think it permissible, for example, to speak of a favorable mutation as a morally good act. But moral good passes into natural good. A change is made and a new equilibrium stabilized. Below man, this happens once for each species; the change toward freedom is not repeated. In man the evolution can be continued, each stage of moral freedom being superseded by a new one. For example, we frequently admire the "goodness" of illiterate peasants as compared with the "badness" of many town dwellers. But this is a romantic confusion. The goodness we admire in the former is a natural, not a moral, goodness. Once, the life of the peasant represented the highest use of the powers of man, the farthest limit of his freedom of action. This is no longer true. The town dweller has a wider range of choice and fuller opportunities of using his powers.

Similarly, there is natural and moral evil. Determined and unavoidable limits to freedom of choice and action, such as the necessity for destroying life in order to eat and live, climate, accidents, are natural evils. If, on the other hand, I, say as the keeper of a boarding-house, knowing that vitamins are necessary to health, continue for reasons of gain or laziness to feed my guests on an insufficient diet, I commit moral evil. Just as moral good tends to pass into natural good, so, conversely, what was

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natural evil tends with every advance in knowledge to become moral evil.

The history of life on this planet is the history of the ways in which life has gained control over its environment. Below the human level this progress has taken place through structural biological changes, depending on the mutations or the chances of natural selection. Only man, with his conscious intelligence, has been able to continue his evolution after his biological development has finished. By studying the laws of physical nature, he has gained a large measure of control over them and in so far as he is able to understand the laws of his own nature and of the societies in which he lives, he approaches toward that state where what he wills may be done. "Freedom" as a famous definition has it, "is consciousness of necessity."

Man's advance in control over his environment is making it more and more difficult for him, at least in industrialized countries with a high standard of living, like America or England, to lead a naturally good life, and easier and easier to lead a morally bad one. Let us suppose, for example, that it is sometimes good for mind and body to take a walk. Before there were means of mechanical transport, men walked because they could not do anything else; that is, they committed naturally good acts. Today a man has to choose whether to use his car or walk. It is possible for him, by using the car on an occasion when he ought to walk, to commit a morally wrong act, and it is quite probable that he will.

A society, then, is good in so far as (a) it allows the widest possible range of choice to its members to follow those vocations to which they are suited; (b) it is constantly developing and providing new vocations which make a fuller demand upon their increasing powers. The Greeks assumed that the life of intellectual contemplation was the only really "good" vocation. It has become very much clearer now that this is only true for certain people, and that there are a great many other vocations of equal value: human nature is richer and more varied than the Greeks thought.

No society can be absolutely good. Utopias, whether like Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, or Dante's Paradiso, because they are static, only portray states of natural evil or good. (Someone, I think it was Landor, said of the characters in the "Inferno": "But they don't want to get out.") People committing acts in obedience to law or habit are not being moral. As voluntary action always turns, with repetition, into habit, morality is only possible in a world which is constantly changing and presenting a fresh series of choices. No society is absolutely good; but some are better than others.

If we look at a community at any given moment, we see that it consists of good men and bad men, clever men and stupid men, sensitive and insensitive, law-abiding and lawless, rich and poor. Our politics, a view of what form our society and our government should take here and now, will depend on (a) how far we think the bad is due to preventable causes; (b) what, if we think the causes preventable, we find them to be. If we take the extremely pessimistic view that evil is in no way preventable, our only course is the hermit's—to retire altogether from this wicked world. If we take a fairly pessimistic view, that badness is inherited—that is, that goodness and badness are not determined by social relations—we shall try to establish an authoritarian regime of the good. If, on the other hand, we are fairly optimistic, believing that bad environment is the chief cause of badness in individuals, and that the environment can be changed, we shall tend toward a belief in some sort of democracy. Personally I am fairly optimistic, partly for reasons which I have tried to outline above and partly because the practical results of those who have taken the more pessimistic view do not encourage me to believe that they are right.

What, then, are the factors which limit and hinder men from developing their powers and pursuing suitable vocations?

1. Lack of material goods. Man is an animal, and until his immediate material and economic needs are satisfied, he cannot develop farther. In the past this has been a natural evil: methods of production and distribution were too primitive to guarantee a proper standard of life for everybody. It is doubtful whether this is any longer true; in which case it is a moral and remediable evil. Under this head I include all questions of wages, food, housing, health, insurance, and the like.

2. Lack of education. Unless an individual is free to obtain the fullest education with which his society can provide him, he is being injured by society. This does not mean that everybody should have the same kind of education, though it does mean, I think, education of some kind or other, up to university age. Education in a democracy must have two aims. It must give vocational guidance and training, assist each individual to find out where his talents lie and then help him to develop these to the full—this for some people might be completed by sixteen; and it must also provide a general education, develop the reason and the consciousness of every individual, whatever his job, to a point where he can for himself distinguish good from bad, and truth from falsehood—this requires a much longer educational period.

At present education is in a very primitive stage; we probably teach the wrong things to the wrong people at the wrong time. It is dominated, at least in England, by an academic tradition which, except for the specially gifted, only fits its pupils to be school teachers. My private theory is that the time for specialization—that is, vocational training—should be in early adolescence, the twelve-to-sixteen group, and again in the latter half of

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the university period; but that the sixteen-to-twenty age group should have a general education.

3. Lack of occupations which really demand the full exercise of the individual's power. This seems to me a very difficult problem indeed. The vast majority of jobs in a modern community do people harm. Children admire gangsters more than they admire factory operatives because they sense that being a gangster makes more demands on the personality than being a factory operative and is therefore, for the individual, morally better. It isn't that the morally better jobs are necessarily better rewarded economically: for instance, my acquaintance with carpenters leads me to think that carpentry is a very good profession, and my acquaintance with stockbrokers to think that stockbrokerage is a bad one. The only jobs known to me which seem worthy of respect, from the point of view of both the individual and society, are being a creative artist, some kind of highly skilled craftsman, a research scientist, a doctor, or farmer. I don't myself much like priggish phrases such as "the right use of leisure"; I agree with Eric Gill that work is what one does to please oneself, leisure the time one has to serve the community. But we must never forget that most people are being degraded by the work they do, and that the possibilities of sharing the duller jobs through the whole community will have to be explored much more fully.

4. Lack of suitable psychological conditions. People cannot grow unless they are happy, and even when their material needs have been satisfied, they still need many other things. They want to be liked and to like other people, to feel valuable, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of others, to feel free and to feel responsible, above all, not to feel lonely and isolated. The first great obstacle is the size of modern communities. By nature man seems adapted to live in communities of a very moderate size; his economic life has compelled him to live in ever-enlarging ones. Many of the damaging effects of family life described by modern psychologists may be the result of our attempt to make the family group satisfy psychological needs which can only be satisfied by the community group. The family is based on inequality, the parent-child relationship; the community is, or should be, based on equality, the relationship of free citizens. We need both. Fortunately, recent technical advances, such as cheap electrical power, are making smaller social units more of a practical possibility than they seemed fifty years ago.

The second obstacle is social injustice and inequality. A man cannot be a happy member of a community if he feels that community is treating him unjustly, and the more complicated and impersonal economic life becomes, the truer this is. In a small factory where employer and employees know each other personally, that is, where the conditions approximate to those of family life, the employees will accept without resentment a great deal more inequality than their fellows in a modern large-scale production plant.

Society consists of a number of individual wills living in association. There is no such thing as a general will of society, except in so far as all these individual wills agree in desiring certain material things, for example, food and clothes. It is also true, perhaps, that all desire happiness and goodness, but their conceptions of these may and do conflict with one another. Ideally, government is the means by which all the individual wills are assured complete freedom of moral choice and at the same time prevented from ever clashing. Such an ideal government, of course, does not and could not ever exist. It presupposes that every individual in society possesses equal power, and also that every individual takes part in the government. In practice, the majority is always ruled by a minority, a certain number of individuals who decide what a law shall be, and who command enough force to see that the majority obeys them.

Democracy assumes, I think correctly, the right of every individual to revolt against his government by voting against it. It has not been as successful as its advocates hoped, first, because it failed to realize the pressure that the more powerful and better-educated classes could bring to bear upon the less powerful and less well-educated in their decisions—it ignored the fact that in an economically unequal society votes may be equal but voters are not—and, secondly, because it assumed, I think quite wrongly, that voters living in the same geographical area would have the same interests, again ignoring economic differences and the change from an agricultural to an industrial economy. I believe that representation should be by trade or profession. No one person has exactly the same interests as another, but I, say as a writer in Birmingham, have more interests in common with other writers in Leeds or London than I have with my next-door neighbor who manufactures cheap jewelry. This failure of the geographical unit to correspond to a genuine political unit is one of the factors responsible for the rise of the party machine. We rarely elect a local man whom we know personally; we have to choose one out of two or three persons offered from above. This seems to me thoroughly unsatisfactory. I think one of our mistakes is that we do not have enough stages in election; a hundred thousand voters are reduced by a single act to one man who goes to Parliament. This must inevitably mean a large degree of dictatorship from above. A sane democracy would, I feel, choose its representatives by a series of electoral stages, each lower stage electing the one above it.

Legislation is a form of coercion, of limiting freedom. Coercion is necessary because societies are not free communities; we do not choose the society into which we are

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born; we can attempt to change it, but we cannot leave it. Ideally, people should be free to know evil and to choose the good, but the consequences of choosing evil are often to compel others to evil. The guiding principle of legislation in a democracy should be, not to make people good, but to prevent them from making one another bad. Thus we would all agree that there should be laws against theft or murder, because no one chooses to be stolen from or murdered. But it is not always so simple. It is argued by laissez faire economists that legislation concerning hours of work, wages, and so forth, violates the right of individual wills to bargain freely. But this presupposes that the bargaining powers of different wills are equal, and that each bargain is an individual act. Neither of these assumptions is true, and economic legislation is justified because they are not.

But there are other forms of legislation which are less justified. It is true that the individual will operating in a series of isolated acts is an abstraction—our present acts are the product of past acts and in their turn determine future ones—but I think the law has to behave as if this abstraction were a fact; otherwise there is no end to legislative interference. Take the case, for instance, of drink. If I become a drunkard, I may impair not only my own health but also that of my children, and it can be argued, and often is, that the law should see that I do not become one by preventing me from purchasing alcohol. I think, however, that this is an unjustifiable extension of the law's function. Everything I do, the hour I go to bed, the literature I read, the temperature of my bath, affects my character for good or bad and so, ultimately, the characters of those with whom I come in contact, and if the legislator is once allowed to consider the distant effects of my acts, there is no reason why he should not decide everything for me. The law has to limit itself to considering the act in isolation: if the act directly violates the will of another, the law is justified in interfering; if only indirectly, it is not.

In theory, every individual has a right to his own conception of what form society ought to take and what form of government there should be and to exercise his will to realize it; on the other hand, everyone else has a right to reject his conception. In practice, this boils down to the right of different political parties to exist, parties representing the main divisions of interest in society. I do not see how in politics one can decide a priori what conduct is moral, or what degree of tolerance there should be. One can only decide which party in one's private judgment has the best view of what society ought to be, and then support it; and remember that since all coercion is a moral evil, we should view with extreme suspicion those who welcome it. Yet I cannot see how a socialist country could tolerate the existence of a fascist party any more than a fascist country could tolerate the existence of a socialist party. Intolerance is an evil and has evil consequences which we can never accurately foresee and which we shall always have to suffer; but there are occasions on which we must be prepared to accept the responsibility of our convictions.

We have the misfortune or the good luck to be living in one of the great critical historical periods, when the whole structure of our society and its cultural and metaphysical values are undergoing a radical change. It has happened before, when the Roman Empire collapsed and at the Reformation, and it may happen again in the future. In periods of steady evolution it is possible for the common man to pursue his private life without bothering his head very much over the principles and assumptions by which he lives, and to leave politics in the hands of professionals. But ours is not such an age. It is idle to lament that the world is becoming divided into hostile ideological camps; the division is a fact. No policy of isolation is possible. Democracy, liberty, justice, and reason are being seriously threatened and, in many parts of the world, destroyed. It is the duty of every one of us, not only to ourselves but to future generations of men, to have a clear understanding of what we mean when we use these words, and to defend what we believe to be right, if necessary, at the cost of our lives.

Pocket Guide

LIBERTY magazine has steadfastly maintained that advertising is not only informative but also educational. Imagine, then, the surprise of Fulton Oursler, its editor, when in his own home he was faced with an attack upon what he calls "the American way of life." For nearly thirty years, he says, he has earned his "bread and cheese" in the publishing business. Yet the other day his little daughter turned to him with large, sad eyes.

"Daddy," she said, "why do you have advertisements in *Liberty?* The things they say are not true. I don't believe a word of them." Mr. Oursler thereupon looked at April as if she were some other family's child and demanded whether she had learned all this at school. It developed that she had got it from a book that the teacher had read, "something about human beings and guinea pigs."*

Mr. Oursler was deeply pained. Filled with a sense of indignation, he set out to fight back; he decided to turn over the pages of *Liberty* to a defense of advertising. He thought of a man who could tell the story so that it would "shine as truth." And who was this man? Someone you've heard of before—not too pleasantly—George E. Sokolsky. And then Mr. Sokolsky's "wonderful story unfolded."

It is quite a story. He doesn't say that Columbus's discovery of America grew out of advertising, but you sort of get that general idea. He says a lot about how Chinese coolies don't live as well as American workers. They don't have much advertising in China, you know. He implies that until the

* "100,000,000 Guinea Pigs," is by Arthur Kallet and F. J. Schlink; "40,000,000 Guinea Pig Children," by Rachel Lynn Palmer and Isadore M. Alpher. The Vanguard Press. $2 each.

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growers started advertising oranges, people didn't realize how good oranges are.

But I'll hand this to Mr. Oursler and his "shining truth" writer: these articles, though not ostensibly for that purpose, make first-class solicitations for advertising. They certainly ought to bring in a good sum of money from California orange growers. *Liberty* doesn't get nearly as much advertising as you would expect to find in a magazine with over 2,000,000 readers, and its high-hearted devotion to the cause is therefore all the more moving. It is frankly dedicated to advertising as a public service. In these articles it stands firmly by the loftiest ideal of truth in advertising.

Curiously enough, the issue which contains the first instalment of "The American Way of Life" carries a great many patent-medicine ads. It seems rather ungrateful of Messrs. Oursler and Sokolsky to glorify oranges, which do not advertise in that issue, and to say nothing in favor of all the patent medicines which have contributed so generously to Mr. Oursler's bread and cheese.

It would be interesting to know a little more about the Consumers' Committee of Mr. Whalen's World's Fair. Its new chairman is Paul Willis of the Associated Grocery Manufacturers. He has been particularly active in the fight against grade labels for canned goods. What's he doing at the head of a Consumers' Committee?

To the reader who asks who is backing the National Consumers' Tax Commission, Inc.: the director of the organization is said to be Horace E. Loomis of Miami, Florida, who was at one time business manager—which often means advertising manager—of the Miami *Daily News*. The commission claims that it is fighting against hidden taxes. That sounds all right, but its argument is that hidden taxes take a quarter of your living expenses (the correct figure is between one-seventh and one-tenth). And therefore you don't live as well as you should. This is nonsense, since a large part of tax receipts goes to make life more comfortable and even more decent. Tax money used for munitions is not mentioned by the Consumers' Tax Commission.

It says that the movement was initiated by women; that it gets help from business, but is furnished as a service in response to women's demands. But if the women demand it so vigorously, why do the organizers have to send around traveling agents to win over women's organizations?

They feel sad because they say you pay 53 taxes on a loaf of bread. They really could do better than that. I am told that if they got down to brass tacks they could figure that you pay 53,000 taxes on a loaf of bread.

What sort of magazine is the *American Consumer?* The *American Consumer* is the successor of the *National Consumer News*. What it has to say about such things as fabrics, furnaces, and fuel is all right, but the attitude of its contributors is not one which readers of *The Nation* are likely to approve. Here's an article demanding a "truce on strikes and lockouts." Here's one pounding away at hidden taxes. Some seem to show tenderness for chain stores. The director of The Neutral Thousands, a California anti-labor organization, contributes a piece on labor. HELEN WOODWARD

In the Wind

THE RIFT between Hermann Göring and Joachim von Ribbentrop has steadily widened in recent weeks. Press dispatches at the time of Ribbentrop's visit to Paris hinted at the breach, which became strikingly apparent when Ribbentrop indiscreetly referred to Göring as a *besternter Harlekin* (star-covered harlequin). Since then the two have collaborated only when actually compelled to do so.

A BAFFLING problem was offered headline writers by the Supreme Court decision in the Consolidated Edison case. Characteristic of the bewilderment it caused was the sudden about-face of the Providence *Evening Bulletin*. In its home edition it used this headline: "Utility Beaten in Supreme Court." In the final edition—more prominently displayed—the headline read: "NLRB Receives First Reverse in Highest Court."

IGNORED BY the press was this recent utterance by Lord Strabolgi in the House of Lords:

> Is he [Lord Halifax] still Foreign Secretary? I thought that the Foreign Office had ceased to function. I did not believe the stories going round about the Foreign Secretary having so little to do that, with his colleagues in France, he was drafting a note to the Vatican praying for the canonization of Judas Iscariot; but I understand that the Prime Minister was doing everything and carrying the whole burden on his shoulders.

AT THE Southern Conference for Human Welfare a last-minute crisis occurred behind the scenes. Ex-Ambassador William E. Dodd was slated to deliver the presentation address when the Thomas Jefferson medal was to be bestowed on Justice Black. Conference sponsors discovered that Dodd's manuscript contained a stinging rebuke for Supreme Court conservatives. John Temple Graves II was hurriedly substituted to make the presentation.

THE SPANISH government has created a sensation in London by submitting to British journalists copies of recent correspondence between Franco and his London emissaries. The letters were presumably intercepted by Loyalist agents. In them Franco proposed the expropriation of British-owned Rio Tinto mines and asked what response such action would arouse. In reply his agents made it clear that the response would be fatal to Franco. They now repudiate the whole correspondence.

LOCAL HEARST editors recently received this memorandum from the executive offices:

> In connection with a proposition made to one of our papers to publicize the coming visit to America of Anthony Eden . . . no paper must give any publicity to what Mr. Eden says. The Chief says: "I think Eden's impudence is only equaled by his lack of vision. We must keep rid of him."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

IN A world seething with race prejudice and the grossest disregard of human rights, the decision of the Supreme Court, in a case taken to that tribunal by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, that the State of Missouri must admit a Negro to the law school of the University of Missouri is cause for unlimited rejoicing. Some years ago in the Berea College case the Supreme Court went in the opposite direction, so far, indeed, that Justice David J. Brewer in his dissenting opinion declared that the court had enabled any state to make it an offense for colored and white citizens to come together in a market-place. Now the court has laid down the doctrine that states which maintain schools for the higher education of whites and afford no facilities for Negroes must admit the latter to the existing schools. In its own words, the court held that "the question here is not of the duty of the state to supply legal training, or of the quality of the training which it does supply, but of its duty when it provides such training to furnish it to the residents of the state upon the basis of an equality of right."

This is an epoch-making decision, a milestone in the Negro's fight for his rights as a citizen, and it will cause consternation throughout the fifteen states which now deny to Negroes the advantages accorded to whites. That in most of these states the authorities will seek to circumvent the decision I have no doubt. They may set up new schools in a couple of rooms and declare that the education offered is equivalent to that afforded to white students, or they will think up some other subterfuge. I am very sure that in the more enlightened Southern universities, if a quiet poll could be taken of the faculties, there would be discovered enough willingness to teach Negroes on equal terms with whites to startle the politicians, many of whom still use anti-Negro prejudice as part of their stock in trade in default of other state issues. I have in mind the fact that at the University of Georgia some of the teachers now cross the street and aid colored students desirous of an education. As zealous upholders of our Constitution these teachers can have no sympathy with the taxation of Negroes for the support of state universities and other schools and then the denial to them of opportunities in the very institutions they are compelled to support. I cannot recall any decision of the Supreme Court of late years affecting the Negro so far-reaching as this, and I am particularly happy that the decision was read by Chief Justice Hughes, who, whatever his faults, has always stood up straight for Negro rights.

Equally remarkable was the recent meeting in Birmingham of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, to which *The Nation* has already referred. Nothing in my lifetime has been more heartening than the fact that there in the South twelve hundred whites and blacks met on a plane of absolute equality—until the police broke in and compelled them to sit on different sides of the room—and unanimously voted for a federal uniform-suffrage law and a federal anti-lynching act. *The Nation* has editorially expressed doubt whether the conference will lead to genuine economic reform. That is important, of course, but for the moment it is completely overshadowed by the stand that I have cited, the significance of which is shown by the fact that the bulk of the Southern press immediately seized upon the segregation issue and duly rebuked the conference. For once they could not charge this horrible treachery to the color-caste, to interloping Northerners, or to Communist agents. These were simon-pure Southerners refusing to be frightened by the question of color. When it is recalled that at the turn of the century there was not a single interracial committee in the South to talk over local problems and iron out the troubles of both races caused by their juxtaposition, this progress is astounding.

That reminds me that I have been reading an extremely interesting little book called "The Color Bar." It is by Peter Nielson, a white man, of Chipinga, South Rhodesia, and copies may be obtained from G. E. Stechert and Company, 31 East Tenth Street, New York. It is a frank, illuminating, and most valuable study of a problem that is even worse than our own. Mr. Nielson has been, I believe, an official and a magistrate and has lived all his life in close touch with the natives. I have never read a book on this question in which the author was more evidently actuated by a desire to attack the race problem from both a Christian and a purely scientific standpoint. His refutation of most of the myths about the Negro is made the stronger by his frank criticism of the colored man's weaknesses, his often very trying qualities. He admits that the color bias is getting worse, and yet he cannot but believe that there are methods of approach which would make the outcome wholly different from that which now threatens. Finally, I must record his statement that "in their innate capacity for rational thinking and for the experiencing of all kinds of human emotion the African natives are in no way different from the members of the great Nordic race to which I happen to belong."

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

GUIDES TO AMERICA

BY JARED PUTNAM

FEW measures of the New Deal have won greater immediate success, few are more significant, than the four art projects—theater, music, graphic and plastic arts, and writing—instituted three years ago under the WPA. A happy and intelligent solution of an incidental problem of relief—what to do with thousands of writers, actors, playwrights, dancers, musicians, sculptors, and painters left destitute by their lordly patrons after the collapse of industrial feudalism in 1929—the projects mark an epoch-making turn not only in public policy but in our national life. Long after much of the New Deal has been forgotten except as an ingenious but futile attempt to shore up a tottering economic structure, the Roosevelt Administration will be remembered as the first to recognize that the arts have a public function, that their growth and flowering require more than mere verbal support, that encouragement of them as a primary force in the long slow process of civilizing ourselves is the proper concern of any democratic government worthy of the name. The distinguished achievements of the projects and the wide popular response to them have been simply astounding. For the first time in America serious workers in the arts have succeeded in reaching and stirring a vast audience of tens of millions.

The work of the Federal Writers' Project is less well known and appreciated than that of the Theater, Art, and Music projects, largely because any immediate striking results were precluded by the nature of the task the project set itself. That task was the monumental one of rediscovering America, practically an unknown continent to most of us. It was necessary to explore every nook and cranny of it before charting and then describing in graphic detail its undreamed-of richness and variety—its history, legend, folklore, conflicting cultures and social patterns, scenery, climate, natural resources, native art forms, and architecture. The story, the portrait, of America that the Writers' Project plans to present in its comprehensive American Guide Series, will picture for us when completed everything worth seeing in city, town, and countryside in all the forty-eight states.

Twelve state guides have now been published, as well as guides to five large cities, three interstate-route guides, and any number of guides to smaller regions and communities. All the state guides follow the same general pattern. An opening section, usually about a fourth of the book, presents the broader aspects of the state—its history and natural features, together with its folkways, resources, government, industries, architecture, literature, recreational and educational facilities, flora and fauna, and so on. Another quarter of the book, more or less, is given to separate detailed tours and descriptions of the larger towns and cities. The remainder consists of routed tours covering almost all numbered highways and every point of genuine interest in the state.

In addition, each volume contains a few pages of information useful to any traveler, a calendar of events, a historical chronology of important happenings in the state, a select bibliography, a full and indispensable index (not always as accurate as it might be), scores of superb illustrations (chiefly contemporary photographs, with a few old cuts), and at least a dozen maps, including a large state map in color, not bound with the book but folded in a pocket inside the back cover. Many critics have hailed the illustrations as alone worth the price of the books, which has been held as far as possible at a $2.50 maximum, for the project has wished to keep the guides within reach of the general public. The price is not as low as could be wished, but there is the possibility that it can be successively reduced as sales increase and new printings are made.

But more specifically, what of the contents of the guides? The material in each is amazingly rich and colorful, presented rather informally in a pleasing and always adequate manner. Not one of the books is dull, although some are much more sprightly and incisive than others. In all, the facts have been allowed to speak for themselves, with no editorial comment. There is a happy want of adjectives, and few purple passages. For the most part the writing is firmly knit, unaffected, and workmanlike; in certain volumes, notably in the Idaho and Massachusetts guides, it is brilliant. The books reveal no trace of provincialism or local bumptiousness with the signal exception of "Mississippi," which contains three highly objectional anti-Negro passages and several puffs of unimportant and wholly uninteresting personalities and places. Only in this volume does such discreditable and trivial matter appear.

Each of the state guides has an individual flavor of its own. "North Dakota" and "South Dakota" are as breezy as the prairie country they describe. The latter in particu-

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lar is filled with good yarns, dramatic conflicts, and illuminating human stories, unimportant as history perhaps but revealing the very stuff of life; its opening essay on South Dakota Today gives more of the feel of the state and its people in five pages than similar essays in other volumes succeed in doing in five times the space. Also, this volume contains a number of charming line drawings, one above each chapter heading and a few as full-page illustrations.

"Maine," on the other hand, is stuffy; alone of the books it inclines toward the soft and sentimental, obviously reflecting the influence of the Kenneth Roberts-Robert Coffin school of local romancers. The other New England books are far more vivid. While not particularly distinguished as a whole, "Connecticut" has its moments, as does "Rhode Island," notably in its description of the sights, sounds, and smells (chiefly social) of Newport. "Vermont" is as solid as the state's granite hills; it is as clipped in speech as Calvin Coolidge, true native son, but is without his occasional sour wit. While much more genial and discursive, "New Hampshire" fails to document the claim that New Hampshire folk are "the merriest of the Puritans." Indeed, in all the books there is a surprising want of humor, as if humor were foreign to our soil. Taking pot shots at stuffed shirts and their pretensions has always been a national pastime, and the guide series does us an injustice in picturing us as so reverential and tediously solemn. From "Delaware," for example, one would get the impression that the du Pont dynasty has been occupied solely with building mansions and roads, breeding horses, and milking blooded cows, instead of building monopolies and milking the public.

A little levity would also have vastly improved "Mississippi," which is as tiresomely sententious as any story-book colonel of the region. With a face as long and straight as Don Quixote's, it fights over again every smallest battle of the Civil War, but can find only a line or two for the recent and now far more significant conflicts on the picket lines of Tupelo and other terrorized mill towns. Without a smile it can announce that Mississippi, facts and figures and the daily press notwithstanding, has no "so-called Negro question," for the editors have made the simply astonishing discovery that the Negro, "seated in the white man's wagon, and subtly letting the white man worry with the reins . . . assures himself a share of all things good"! If many such passages of arrant nonsense creep into the copy, the usefulness and prestige of the guide series will be seriously impaired.

In many respects the two volumes first published, "Idaho" and "Massachusetts," remain the best of the series to date. They both reveal a sharp eye for significant material and use a bold stroke in presenting it. Both are studded with gems of characterization and description. The essay on Idaho's history is brilliant, convincingly revealing that the pioneers as conventionally fictionalized are "shoddy sawdust counterfeits who would have been as much out of place in the old West as Chief Nampuh with his huge feet would have been among the theatrical ineptitudes of a Victorian tea." The essay on literature in "Massachusetts" has no parallel in any of the other books, nor have its inspired portraits of two very different towns—ghostly Deerfield and bustling Lawrence.

The spontaneity, grace, and free-swinging punch of these first books have been lost to a degree in succeeding volumes, and the several reasons for this should be seriously considered by all interested in the project's future. The first is the tendency to conform to a stereotype, to freeze into a hard-and-fast form, with all material clipped and fitted by formula. If the series as a whole is to have life and color, there must still be room for experiment. The general frame worked out for the books is excellent, being ample and flexible enough to contain everything relevant. Within the broad confines of that frame writers in the several states should be encouraged to produce their own kind of guidebook.

The second is the presence of a special policy editor in the project's Washington office, installed there over the head of the director after Governor Hurley and allied reactionaries raised a hullabaloo against the Massachusetts book for stating incontrovertible facts about the Sacco-Vanzetti case and for picturing objectively the labor situation in the state. This editor reviews all copy and removes material deemed impolitic or offensive.

The third is that all books must now have state clearance, often political and obtainable only at considerable sacrifice. It is well known in publishing circles that the New Jersey guide, reputedly a conscientious and sparkling piece of work, has been ready for publication for more than a year but is still being held up by forces outside the project. At the present time, it should be explained, all books must have local sponsors, usually elected officials, state planning boards, historical societies, or the like, who hold copyright and contract for publication. In New Jersey it has not yet been possible to find a sponsor liberal enough not to demand the emasculation of the book and at the same time acceptable to the politicos in the state and in Washington. The book may never see the light of day unless writers and readers unite to demand an end to such sabotage.

As several guides have already suffered mutilation at the hands of local sponsors with axes to grind, there is obvious need of establishing a broad national committee of critics, editors, writers, historians, scientists, economists, sociologists, and public-spirited citizens to sponsor publication of the guides and free them from undesirable pressures. A precedent exists in the publication of many important volumes under the sponsorship of the Guild's Committee for Federal Writers' Publications, composed

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of such well-known editors, critics, and writers as Franklin P. Adams, Bruce Bliven, Van Wyck Brooks, Henry S. Canby, Lewis Gannett, and others. This committee sponsored and left intact what is without question the most distinguished work yet done by the project, "New York Panorama," the first of the two volumes of the New York City guide.

"New York Panorama" is a joy—except for its illustrations, which were reproduced by a cheap and obviously faulty process. In swift and vigorous prose its pages offer a breath-taking view, long in vista, sharp and clear-cut in detail, of the world's greatest metropolis, virtually a civilization in itself, radiating an influence felt in all the far corners of the earth. Here is complete vindication of the project's collective-writing methods. The book was created by hundreds of minds and represents many points of view; as a result the city emerges as a living, breathing, growing thing, not a silhouette but a three-dimensional figure, seen from every angle. There is nothing like it in our literature. Let doubters read any or all of its thirty-six sections, but especially these: The Contemporary Scene, New World Symphony, The Local Vernacular, Market-Place for Words, Bricks of the City, Folk Tune to Swing, Water Gate, and The Urban Pattern.

Of the four other large city guides, "Washington" is not merely adequate but encyclopedic, although its bulk is such that it can scarcely be carried as a guidebook without fear of physical collapse. The Philadelphia and Rochester books leave much to be desired—both are clumsy and padded; but "New Orleans" has great charm and has deservedly ranked high on best-seller lists.

Mention should be made of the interstate-route guides: "Intercoastal Waterway" (from Norfolk, Virginia, to Key West), "U. S. One, Maine to Florida," and "The Ocean Highway," the last two containing recipes of characteristic dishes to be tasted along the way. Many more guides of this type are in preparation. Of a very different character is the wholly delightful "Cape Cod Pilot, a Loquacious Guide," filled with marvelous stories and bubbling with salty wit, by Jeremiah Digges, the only one of the series to carry a by-line. Hailed from coast to coast, this experiment was so successful that one cannot understand why there have not been other personalized books of this character.

The "boondogglers" of the Federal Writers' Project would seem not to have had their feet on their desks all the time. Both the quality and quantity of their work are impressive. Indeed, as guides continue to come from the press ever more rapidly, there is increasing reason to echo Lewis Mumford in pronouncing the American Guide Series "the finest contribution to American patriotism that has been made in our generation."

The almost complete failure of the project to provide writers with an opportunity to do individual creative work is another story.

A list of the guidebooks published up to the present is given below:

Idaho, a Guide in Word and Picture. Caxton Printers, $3.
Massachusetts, a Guide to Its Places and People. New Hampshire, a Guide to the Granite State. Vermont, a Guide to the Green Mountain State. Connecticut, a Guide to Its Roads, Lore, and People. Rhode Island, a Guide to the Smallest State. Maine, a Guide "Down East." New Orleans City Guide. Houghton Mifflin Company. Each $2.50.
Mississippi, a Guide to the Magnolia State. Delaware, a Guide to the First State. Iowa, a Guide to the Hawkeye State. Viking Press. Each $2.50. *Cape Cod Pilot.* By Jeremiah Digges, Viking Press. By Arrangement with Modern Pilgrim Press. $2.
North Dakota, a Guide to the Northern Prairie State. Knight Publishing Company. $1.25.
South Dakota Guide. State Publishing Company. $2.
Washington: City and Capital. Government Printing Office. $3. *Intercoastal Waterway* (Norfolk, Virginia, to Key West). Government Printing Office. 25 cents.
New York Panorama. Volume I. Random House. $2.50.
U. S. One, Maine to Florida. The Ocean Highway (New Brunswick, New Jersey, to Jacksonville, Florida). Modern Age Books. Each 95 cents.
Philadelphia, a Guide to the Nation's Birthplace. William Penn Association. $2.50.
Rochester and Monroe County. Rochester: Scrantom's. $2.

Audit of Fascism

FASCISM FOR WHOM? By Max Ascoli and Arthur Feiler. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.

"WHO benefits from fascism? Possibly the self-perpetuating oligarchy of major and minor chiefs. Yet even the collective gain of these few thousand oligarchs is a poor and doubtful return for the enormous risk that the world is running." This is Mr. Ascoli's answer to the question put in the title, as far as Italy is concerned. The result of Mr. Feiler's description of National Socialism is almost the same: "Neither anti-capitalism, pre-capitalism, nor capitalism has remained victor. In fact, all their aims and aspirations have been subdued by the omnipotent party."

For years a joint analysis of both Italian and German fascism has suggested itself, and the two distinguished members of the New School for Social Research are without question highly competent to do it. Ascoli's approach substantially differs from Feiler's. The chapters about Italian fascism are a brilliant psychological essay rather than a systematic sociological analysis, while the section dealing with Germany mainly gives a solid outline of the facts and developments in the Third Reich. Both the section on International Fascism and the final chapter on The Two Fascisms—and Our Civilization were written in collaboration.

Ascoli, in the Italian section, emphasizes the individualistic starting-point of fascism as well as its intentional lack of any definite program. It was simply a combination of political aggressiveness and methodical violence, with political power

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as a definite goal. For as long as four years fascism fluctuated between anti-capitalistic radicalism and old-fashioned reaction. It took from every party or movement a part of its program and overtopped all of them by its richer vitality and instinct. It knew how to use fear, and how to turn democratic tools against democratic goals. It declared the primacy of politics over economics and won even the support of a large section of the workers by its dynamism. "Rather than look at themselves in that mirror [of hopelessness], they preferred to throw it against those who so insistently had been holding it in front of their faces." The Labor Trust was a great attempt to organize both business and labor under a corporative system, though it remained for years mere theory.

As to the capitalists, Ascoli states, the Fascists cleverly cultivated their permanent fear, and all capitalists now realize that, no matter what their present condition may be, they must stand by fascism or fall with it. He describes the present regime as fascist capitalism, with a trend toward fascist state socialism. The new ruling class is identical with the party bureaucracy; the rank and file—particularly the rural majority of the population—is largely unpolitical.

Ascoli has a tendency to appraise a bit too objectively the progressive aspect of fascist policy. He really believes that in the last few years wages increased as much as the cost of living and is impressed by the collective side of fascism, which he calls "democracy without freedom"—what a contradiction *in adiecto!*

Feiler's analysis of National Socialism is particularly thorough as far as economic policy is concerned, though he treats with an even hand the achievements and deficiencies of the Weimar democracy. His point of view is that of a liberal democrat, and in his opinion it is less than a half-truth to believe that fascism is "the last refuge of decaying capitalism," though he does not say quite clearly whether there is a definite connection between the economic disintegration of Europe and the fascist trend. The anti-capitalistic, though at the same time anti-socialist, revolt of the middle classes played, in his view, a decisive part in the success of National Socialism, which is defined as "the anti-capitalistic revolt of pre-capitalistic masses coupled with the financial support of big capitalistic forces, with racial nationalism as its flag."

The chapters on labor organization and the German version of corporatism constitute one of the best descriptions so far published of what the social system of the Third Reich actually means, and in Feiler's view a transformation of the enormous armament expenditures into peaceful works is inconceivable mainly because of the political ideology of National Socialism. On the other hand, from his point of view the gulf between Bolshevism and National Socialism is gradually being bridged over from both banks. He declines the theory of an "inevitable breakdown" of the Nazi system, holding that there is no breakdown of a regime unless another force breaks it.

In the two joint chapters the two authors emphasize that both in its national and international aspects fascism originates in the unfulfilled promises of democracy. International fascism means a national reproduction of methods applied both in Italy and Germany, though Italian realism seems to differ greatly from the timeliness of the Nazi faith. An appeal to the other nations, and particularly to the United States with its sound democratic sense, to resist, in time, the fascist onslaught concludes the book. Although it deals very little with such aspects of fascism as the religious one or that of foreign policy, and does not endeavor to give a general sociology of fascism, it is a highly valuable contribution to the outstanding problem of our time.

ALBERT LAUTERBACH

America Reconsidered

AMERICA NOW. Edited by Harold E. Stearns. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.

THE publication of "Civilization in the United States" in 1922 had the merit of being an adventure in letters. The time was one of unrest and confusion. Like Europe, America was interested in knowing where it was going, what this large chunk of a continent, providentially less sprayed with bullets and less reeking with carrion, was headed for. Mr. Stearns, among the many mourners at the grave of civilization—we did not yet know the true depth of that grave—had conceived the happy idea of calling in a number of literary and scientifically equipped consultants in order to take stock of ourselves.

The attempt was brave though halting. Many of the contributors were young, though a considerable number of them have since made their mark, and their not altogether correlated points of view represented that mixture of undigested pessimism and equally undigested hopefulness characteristic of youth. The book was not too well received and its sale remained small. Most of the critics went out of their way to patronize it and even do a little knuckle rapping, in the manner of reproving elders.

Of the thirty-three contributors to the original volume only five have come through for a repeat. This leaves little basis for estimating any change in the point of view of the group as a whole. One misses Lewis Mumford, as one misses any discussion at all of the baffling problem of urban concentration which Mumford would have been preeminently fitted to expound. Also missing is Van Wyck Brooks, whose deeper preoccupation with the problem of New England culture would have made it interesting to have him reconsider some of his doubts and uncertainties about the American literary scene. Others, like Garet Garrett and H. L. Mencken, have eliminated themselves by grinding particularist axes. Among the dead, J. Thorne Smith, the rebel in the advertising ranks, has been replaced by Roy S. Durstine, one of the moguls of the profession, whose inevitable sales talk has made him a not altogether happy choice.

No one who attended any of the informal editorial conferences of that earlier group could have doubted the spontaneous quality of the collaboration. It was a new idea, and we were all concerned to make it a success. Fortunately, also, most of us were within hailing distance of New York, for quick consultation. All this made for unity and coherence, if not for tame agreement. It is this quality of cohesion which is sadly absent in the present volume. Some of the essays are quite perfunctory; a number of them dismiss their subject within ten pages. Some have a purely reportorial emphasis. Others are isolated monographs, like Menninger's article on

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Psychiatry, and make strange bedfellows outside an encyclopedia of the social sciences.

Then, too, the clock has moved on since 1922. There is no discussion of academic freedom, an important subject which has come well to the fore in the last two decades. The changing nature of our political institutions is another case in point. Radicalism proved too much of an omnibus assignment for Mr. Soule; the very term has become almost as loose in its connotations as liberalism. And surely the dynamics of the present-day all-engulfing propaganda technique deserved more than scattered references.

But even granting mistakes of omission and the difficulty of doing justice to those subjects selected within the confines of one volume, the real trouble perhaps lies in the fact that the whole subject is no longer new. Repetition smacks of a now defunct intellectual Chautauqua, the very deliberateness of which challenges a possibly captious demand for perfection. Take, for contrast, the essays which the Cordells have annually collected under the heading of "American Points of View." These also give a tangible bit of America "now" for any current year. But they do so by implication, not according to program. It is also interesting to observe that a not inconsiderable number of the Cordells' authors are on Mr. Stearns's list, but that their performances in the less pretentious collection are often superior.

It would be invidious to make selections. Some of the essays, like V. F. Calverton's piece on the Negro and Jacques Barzun's timely treatment of Race Prejudice, are vital and refreshing, with something of the zest of the original volume. Louis R. Reid is again informative about the Radio and the Movies, and Louis Stark knows what it is all about when he writes about labor. Dr. Logan Clendening, on the other hand, merely reflects the orthodoxy of Dr. Morris Fishbein and plays down socialized medicine with generalities.

What of Mr. Stearns, the bellwether of his flock? Mr. Stearns contributes an essay on American Intellectual Life in addition to his rather nebulous editing. He writes with his customary ease and with an uncanny faculty for "echoing" all the latest intellectual novelties, right up to semantics, with plausible finality. He chides both communism and fascism with worldly-wise condescension, like a guest at a Long Island week-end party steering a wary course between a possible member of the Italian Embassy staff among the diners and a literary lion whom the hostess has invited without knowing that he has just joined the "party." Communism is touched upon by a number of the other contributors, notably Chamberlain and Krutch, both of whom dwarf their general survey of literature and drama by laboring the truism that undigested propaganda is bound to fetter the artist. But none of them do it with the intellectual shoddiness of Mr. Stearns. By this time communism has earned the right to be abused intelligently. A biographical note informs us that Mr. Stearns looks upon his long absence in Paris as a "thirteen years' sabbatical" leave. Among the multiple mythologies which grew up about him during that period there is none which reports that he spent much time at the Sorbonne. Perhaps some of the effects of that excessive sabbatical are reflected in the shortcomings of "America Now," in terms of the editor's none-too-well-disguised unfamiliarity with the American scene.

ALFRED B. KUTTNER

Mr. Graves Declines with Rome

COUNT BELISARIUS. By Robert Graves. Random House. $3.

THIS biography of a great general of the late Roman Empire is unlikely to repeat the popular success of the author's Claudius books. Mr. Graves here employs the same formula that he worked so successfully in the past, that of the honest man trapped in a social network of intrigue and corruption; but this time the formula misses fire.

The failure can be explained partly by the fact that Mr. Graves has neglected to endow his central character with the gift of awareness, so that the progress of Belisarius through the reign of Justinian is about as dramatic as the progress of a white mouse through the dark runway of a scientist's maze. It can also be attributed to what are, from the novelist's point of view, the deficiencies of the Byzantine period itself. One might expect that the very decadence of the late empire would offer the historical novelist unlimited material for "colorful" writing, but such is not the case. The period of the Julian emperors, with which the Claudius books dealt, marked the establishment of the power idea in politics on a world scale; coincidentally it marked the emergence of what we call personality in the strong and eccentric individuals who symbolized and wielded the new imperial power. Mr. Graves in his earlier books was exploiting the first sensational flare-up of this phenomenon of personality in such bizarre but tabloid-modern and recognizable figures as Livia, Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero. Unfortunately, by the sixth century, Belisarius's period, the individual had advanced from being absorbed in the state (the first stage), through dominating it (the second stage), to being engulfed by it (the third stage). The people with whom "Count Belisarius" is concerned have been ironed out by the immense bureaucratic apparatus of the dying empire. "Personality" has disappeared, and persons can be sorted, roughly, into two categories, the good and the bad, with very little distinction being made between separate members of each category. The contemporary historians on whom Mr. Graves draws have lost the interest in character which bulks so large in Tacitus or Suetonius. They still tell their scandalous anecdotes, but zestlessly, for their preoccupation is with the mechanics of administration, the military campaigns, the ecclesiastical disputes, and the public works.

Mr. Graves, to the detriment of his novel, takes no notice of this change in the conception of the individual. He writes about the age of Justinian in exactly the same manner as he wrote about the age of Augustus, that is, he adheres with scholarly tenacity to his sources, and he turns his spotlight impartially on the celebrities of the day. Unluckily, his sources this time furnish him with featureless faces, and he has not the historical impudence to sketch in what is missing or the historical acumen to turn his camera from the close-up of the single human being to the perspective shot of the group. He sticks to the exploits of prominent men and he sticks to his sources. The result is a stylishly written and enormously detailed account of a great number of expeditions and battles, with biographical data supplied, whenever possible, on generals and other officers of rank.

MARY MC CARTHY

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Attila Diplomacy

THE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY. By F. Elwyn Jones. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

F. ELWYN JONES is by vocation a London lawyer, by nature an extreme left-winger, and by avocation a thoroughly good journalist. As a border-line Communist, he has a way of believing the worst. A year ago—in his "Hitler's Drive to the East," for example—it was not so easy to agree with all his somber views. Today it is not difficult.

"The Defence of Democracy" is an invaluable guide to the German-Italian attempt to dominate the world by excluding Russia from Europe, chiseling France into the position of a second-class power, and crippling the British Empire by cutting life-line after life-line.

Mr. Jones starts by taking the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo alliance against communism for what it is worth—a united attempt to weaken the democracies, especially Britain and the empire. It is a war front, and the desire of the democrats for peace at any price has been cleverly exploited by the machine-gun crew. It is especially significant today that the "mediator" at Munich should have been none other than the pacifier of Ethiopia and Spain. It is significant, too, that this peaceful Roman is now stirring up trouble in Tunis, Palestine, Arabia, the Hejaz, the Yemen, Hadramaut, and even Ireland—any place where there is a chance of further immobilizing French and British forces while the Duce turns the Mediterranean into an Italian lake.

Hitler also is stirring up trouble in no fewer than twenty-four European countries, and in Africa, the Near East, North America, and South America. Very carefully Mr. Jones goes into all the ramifications of Nazi imperialism, overt and secret—its notorious "Harbor Service" and its 528 local Nazi groups functioning abroad. He also traces the secret connections between the Cagoulards in France and their German, Italian, and Spanish backers. Even before Daladier, in what now seem to have been the halcyon days of Chautemps, the Premier was forced to admit that "France has been made to appear like a nation besieged."

Mark down Abyssinia, Spain, Austria, and Czechoslovakia as having been sold to the dictators at bargain prices, and you have left a "peace" that sees all Eastern Europe in a panic, with Hungary possibly destined to become another Austria, Rumania another Czechoslovakia, the Balkan Entente another Little Entente. Then, after the English and French have donated the last scrap of a Portuguese or Belgian colony to Hitler, you may reach a final showdown, when, to quote Professor Tawney's memorable phrase, England and France may decide that it is "better to die on your feet than live on your knees."

On the final day of reckoning, Mr. Jones believes that the democracies will find unsuspected support from within the dictatorships. A good block of this book is devoted to a detailed account of anti-fascist conspiracies within Germany and Italy. But, as Mr. Jones says, these brave democrats can make a dent in the backsides of Hitler and Mussolini only if the democracies are willing to poke the dictators in the stomach. Otherwise their activities "can consist of little more than acts of individual heroism."

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The key, the author rightly concludes, to all the contradictions and failures of English and French policy is the initial assumption that cooperating with the aggressor and maintaining peace are one and the same thing.

JULIAN BACH, JR.

DRAMA

Prodigals' Return

PHILIP BARRY and Elmer Rice, two playwrights not heard from during the past few years, have returned to town with new plays. Both authors once enjoyed great success, and both had apparently deserted the stage forever after a series of failures which neither was prepared to accept. The new plays have points in their favor, but each is essentially in the manner of its author's failures rather than in the manner of his earlier successes. In other words, both Mr. Barry and Mr. Rice are up to their old tricks—not, unfortunately, up to their oldest tricks.

Before the emergence of S. N. Behrman, Mr. Barry was our best writer of polite comedy. The true gift was his, but he valued it so little that he was said to have only contempt for "Paris Bound," one of the earliest as well as one of the best of his pieces, and he gradually sacrificed success to two tendencies incompatible not only with the spirit of comedy but also, it would seem, with each other. Increasingly Mr. Barry became a snob and a mystic. His later plays were full of yearning elegants who seemed equally concerned with the meaning of the universe and with what the well-dressed man will wear—in his head as well as on it. "Hotel Universe" fooled the public, but once was enough, and Mr. Barry's reputation faded away as his plays grew feebler and more meaningness. "Here Come The Clowns," dramatized from his own novel of the same name and now current at the Booth Theater, is far better—at least as theatrical entertainment—than anything he has written in a long time, and that is partly because the Cholly Knickerbocker touch is absent, even though the amateur theology is, if anything, more obtruded than ever before. This time the search for God goes on, not at Hotel Universe on the Cap d'Antibes, but in and around the Globe Theater (please note the symbolism) where minor vaudevillians gather.

Some critics to the contrary, there is nothing obscure about the "message" of the play. Its much troubled hero is a stage hand who goes looking for God in order to find the answer to a few questions, but who falls instead into the hands of a charlatan and believes for a time that this faker's ruthless and destructive exposure of facts better left hidden is leading toward the truth our hero desires. In the end the charlatan is unmasked, and as the hero dies he proclaims his great discovery: God exists, but man's will is free, and man, not God, is responsible for evil and suffering. The trouble with this idea, as an idea, is not that it is too complex, but merely that it is too simple; and the trouble with the play, as a play, is merely that its author quite mistakenly supposes that the lives he is portraying seem more rather than less interesting and significant when they are "explained" in accordance with his intellectual scheme.

Both the dialogue and the situations are highly effective in a rather lurid and theatrical way. The play is well acted by an excellent company headed by Eddie Dowling, who plays the hero with an innocent, rapt, and almost artless enthusiasm which clearly reveals his intense belief in his part. But it is unfortunate that a playwright, of all people, should not understand that human life and suffering as an artist can picture them are far more interesting mysteries than any likely to be revealed by the speculations of an amateur theologian. Offhand I can think of no good play about God. Theology is not a dramatic subject, though a myth may be; or rather, as I perhaps should say, myths are theology which has really been dramatized. Perhaps it would be a good thing for Mr. Barry to consider to what genre the play he has attempted to write inevitably belongs. It belongs with "The Servant in the House," "The Passing of the Third Floor Back," and even—just to show the stretch of my memory—"The Man from Mars."

In "American Landscape" (Cort Theater) Mr. Rice also is attempting, with something less than full success, to get out of the bad habits into which he allowed himself to fall. He, goodness knows, never went in for either mysticism or snobbery, but he did, like Mr. Barry, get so much interested in "explanation" that he lost the power to create human beings and lost it for the simple reason that human beings had ceased to concern him except in so far as they could be treated as sociological abstractions. The new play, though

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far less intemperate and confused than most of his recent work, grows out of a thesis, and it often seems prosy and dull because its personages so obviously have little life of their own. It is hard to believe that a writer who, even in such minor plays as "Counselor-at-Law" and "The Left Bank," revealed an almost uncanny gift for catching the rhythm of everyday speech and imitating the gestures of men and women could write dialogue as lifeless as most of that in the present play; and the fact that he can do so should stand as an awful warning to the artist who confuses artistic seriousness with seriousness of any other kind. With everything Mr. Rice here has to say I have the profoundest sympathy, but there is no use in pretending that his essay is much more than an essay or that it gains much by calling itself a play. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

FILMS

A QUARTER of a century ago George Bernard Shaw wrote the satirical play "Pygmalion," which still sparkles as it did on its first night—which cannot be said about many plays of such great stage age. Mr. Higgins, professor of phonetics and, for purposes of the last act, not only a fanatical scientist but a confirmed bachelor, wagers that he can, within six months, transform a cockney girl into a lady who will stand the high test of a royal reception. He wins his bet by teaching her correct English and superficial manners. The course is pretty strenuous for the victim. He treats her like a guinea pig and does not see—though otherwise he is intelligent and sophisticated—that she is falling in love with him, or, for that matter, that he is falling in love with her.

I could never detect more than an artificial analogy to the Greek myth which the title of the play suggests. The sculptor Pygmalion formed Galatea from a piece of clay, whereas Professor Higgins (Leslie Howard) attempts the opposite—to change a most lively and unspoiled piece of nature, the wild, dirty guttersnipe Eliza Doolittle (Wendy Hiller), into a piece of soap. But the movie edition of Shaw's play (presented by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) informs me again in an introduction that Pygmalion is the modern version of the Galatea theme. I suspect that this claim, which takes a device for the real story, is partly responsible for what is wrong with an excellent, witty, and always entertaining picture. To confess it right away, nothing is wrong if one compares it with the average picture; but if one considers it as literature, which is permissible in this case, criticism is in order.

The fault seems to lie with the script. It not only follows the play too closely, repeating its errors, but even more than the play it stresses the situations of the transformation process at the expense of more important values. Miss Doolittle is washed, learns to spell, to speak words and sentences. At a tea party—a most delightful scene in itself—she passes her first examination. Finally she triumphs by duping the nobility in a long sequence outstanding in every respect but especially in restraint and taste. But the lessons, her scenes alone with Professor Higgins, remain less convincing for the reason mentioned. We see the pupil suffering under the un-

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tiring fanaticism of the teacher, but we do not see her falling in love with him. This development is neglected to make way for cheaper effects, until it is needed for the end. Then the newly created lady throws the professor's slippers in his face, and we are allowed to guess what must have been going on all the time. Could we have followed it, the unfolding of a character and a soul would have counterbalanced the gags, subtle though they are, and the whole picture, without losing its lightness, could have achieved depth. Instead of three dimensions it might have had four, and it is with the fourth, the irrational, that art begins.

If the shortcomings of the script are not felt as long as one looks at the screen, we have to thank Wendy Hiller, who steals the show. Miss Hiller's performance on Broadway two years ago in "Love on the Dole," where she had occasion to exploit the wide range of her personality, was a great experience. She must win the hearts of all moviegoers, and surely not with cuteness and pretense. She is the type the great industry needs badly—a full-blooded person who creates a role out of the abundance of her nature. She makes one forget the tricksters who turn their defects into virtues or, at least, salaries.

Leslie Howard does very intelligently everything a Professor Higgins may do, but one cannot quite believe him. He is too conscious, too slick. He plays with skill a thought-out conception. In lesser parts Wilfred Lawson, Esme Percy, and David Tree give excellent performances. They breathe contemporary English atmosphere. The direction (Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard) and the production (Gabriel Pascal, who must have the credit for conquering Shaw's antagonism to the movies) compete successfully with Hollywood's best works of this kind. More pictures like "The Citadel" and "Pygmalion" from London, and there will be story conferences in California.

"40 Little Mothers" (National Pictures) is a French film which will delight all the admirers of "La Maternelle" and "Ballerina." It has the same humane qualities and is in its theme quite different from the normal run. A poor professor —whom we like at first glance better than Professor Higgins —with five degrees and without a job finds at the door of his bare hotel room a baby, eighteen-month-old little Philippe, and immediately loves the foundling. When he gets a job as teacher in a fashionable girls' finishing school in the country he takes the baby along in a trunk. The funny and touching situations in which he finds himself and the sequences by which his pupils become the "forty mothers" of the child are presented simply, but with great psychological insight and with wit and taste.

Lucien Baroux plays superbly and convincingly the difficult part of the lonesome bachelor who cannot part from a baby which gets him into one difficulty after another. He has the capacity to induce tears—which change within the moment to tears of laughter. By all means see this picture! It is especially recommended to expectant fathers and ordinary pessimists. One leaves it happy.

FRANZ HOELLERING

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Letters to the Editors

Tributes to Paul Anderson

Dear Sirs: It is sad indeed to learn of the loss of one whom I had come to consider among the best of *The Nation's* contributors. Mr. Anderson's terse, expressive language, his incisive observation, his keen humor will be greatly missed. Above all, his ever-earnest sincerity will be difficult to duplicate. May the pages of *The Nation* serve as a living memorial worthy of writers such as he. HARRY J. MC ANDREW

Barre, Vt., December 6

Dear Sirs: I knew Paul Y. Anderson only as a "by-line," but I eagerly read everything printed under it. In a day of a prostituted and debauched press Paul Anderson and the papers which opened their columns to his talents stand out as beacon lights. He may well take his place beside Lincoln Steffens, John Kenneth Turner, and a few, a precious few, others whom Roosevelt the First denounced as muckrakers.

GEO. P. LISCHER

St. Louis, Mo., December 6

Dear Sirs: It was with deep regret that I heard of the death of Paul Anderson soon after I had finished reading his last characteristically fearless article from Washington. The high testimonials that have since been given to his work as a newspaper correspondent give me greater pride in my profession.

CHARLES F. SPEARE

New York, December 8

Teachers College and Mr. Wechsler

Dear Sirs: Mr. Wechsler's article on Teachers College in the last issue of *The Nation* identifies one of the oldest liberal journals of the country with the political sectarianism which has given pattern to the article. Its publication can only divide the forces and weaken the cause of liberalism and democracy in American life and education.

Though true in some respects and couched in the phrases of objectivity, it is full of insinuation and misrepresentation. Taken as a whole it is profoundly false and misleading. We see in it the hand of a political sect in American life which operates on the principle that it will destroy whatever it cannot rule.

While we have our problems at Teachers College and while there are some tendencies here which give us concern, we believe that the institution is more liberal in its social outlook and practice than at any other time in its history and one of the most liberal institutions of higher learning in America.

EDMUND DE S. BRUNNER, JOHN L. CHILDS, DONALD P. COTTRELL, GEORGE S. COUNTS, GEORGE W. HARTMANN, F. ERNEST JOHNSON, JESSE H. NEWLON, BRUCE RAUP, HAROLD RUGG, HELEN M. WALKER, MERLE CURTI.

New York, December 17

Dear Sirs: I had not planned to make any public statement about the reasons for my withdrawal from the Teachers' Union. Mr. Wechsler's article insinuating that Dean Russell is responsible for this action on my part makes a brief statement necessary. I am more than ever convinced that teachers are workers; that both their functions and their needs will be best provided for in a democratic socialized economy; and that they should unite with other workers to advance their common interests. I withdrew from Teachers' Union for one reason and one reason only—the present domination of the New York locals by left-wing political sects. If either Mr. Wechsler or his associates of *The Nation* have any doubt about this, I am prepared to set out in some detail my experiences with the Stalinists in these locals. JOHN L. CHILDS

New York, December 18

[It is a matter of record that Mr. Wechsler is in no way identified with any political sect; no sentence in his article introduced the kind of "political sectarianism" of which he is accused in the first letter printed above; and what is perhaps most amazing, no fact in his recital of developments at Teachers College is challenged—including the glaring instance of suppression of which Dr. Counts was himself the victim. To discern in this article the "hand of a political sect" is as unjust to those faculty members who refused to sign the letter as it is to the author of the article. As for the complaint that Teachers College still compares favorably with other institutions, Mr. Wechsler made just that point; but surely such outstanding critics of American education know that the comparison begs the question. Mr. Childs's letter is even more baffling since his name was not mentioned in connection with the withdrawals from the Teachers' Union. In citing such withdrawals Mr. Wechsler emphasized that they could not be traced to so simple a factor as personal insecurity.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Arab Liberalism Suspect

Dear Sirs: Raif N. Khuri, the Palestine Arab delegate to the Second World Youth Congress, offered his solution to Palestine's woes in *The Nation* for October 29. May I, a veteran American Zionist with more than five years of residence in Palestine, give my reaction to Mr. Khuri's solution?

I am in full agreement with Mr. Khuri that Jew and Arab in Palestine must unite for their common cause and would say even more emphatically than he that British imperialism has tricked both the Jews and the Arabs and is not at all interested in cooperation between the two peoples. Anyone who has lived in Palestine can give positive testimony that His Majesty's servants helped foment trouble between the two factions.

However, before reaching this desired end of cooperation between Arabs and Jews there is still a long road to travel. An agreement is defined as a meeting of minds, and minds cannot meet when a curtain of doubt and suspicion separates them. My suspicions are that the soft-spoken and ostensibly well-meaning words of Mr. Khuri in *The Nation,* Mr. Katiba in the New York *Times,* and other Arab gentlemen elsewhere are meant solely for foreign consumption. After two and a half years of unprovoked murder and pillage and arson the only quasi-liberal note that an Arab gentleman strikes is in the foreign press. Why have these well-meaning spokesmen of the Arab people not raised their voices in *Phalastin* and *Al Liva* and *Ad Defaa* and the other Arab newspapers of Palestine? If they are Arab liberals who really desire a liberal solution of the Arab-Jewish problem,

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why do they not make an attempt to sell their liberalism at home before they exhibit it abroad? They cannot be ignorant of the numerous official pronouncements of Jewish leaders that Zionists are always ready to negotiate with liberal Arabs for a mutually satisfactory solution.

These Arab liberals must also know that militant Arab nationalism is to a large extent an excuse for a tribal feud of very long standing. The tribe of the Husseinis, headed by the Grand Mufti, hates the rival family of the Nashashibis more than it hates the Jews, and the present terrorism has liquidated many Nashashibis, with the eminent Sidki Dajani only recently paying for his ancestral sins. The truculent Mufti is not "a bogyman created by Zionist propaganda," as Mr. Khuri puts it, but a vindictive and ambitious tribal chieftain who will stop at nothing to get rid of the hated Nashashibis and become the Führer and exploiter of Palestine.

Strangely enough it is the Zionist hunger for land in Palestine which has raised land values and liberated the *fellah,* whom the usurious *effendis* made a share-cropper on his own, heavily mortgaged land. By selling part of his land to Jews the Arab *fellah* has been able to pay off his debts and modernize his estate so as to make his remaining land yield much more than his total holding did before.

As to Mr. Khuri's preoccupation with "the purchase of land by Zionist capitalists," for his information I will state that the total land holdings of Jews amount to one and a quarter million dunams—only one-tenth of all the cultivable land in the mandated area; and one-third of the Jewish holdings belongs to the Jewish National Fund, which makes it unavailable for further sale or speculation. So far as tenants' rights and squatters' rights are concerned, when land is bought in Palestine, not only are the legitimate tenants given compensation, but all kinds of bogus squatters' claims have to be satisfied. I have had experience with such transactions in Palestine and know that in many instances, as a result of antiquated Turkish laws regarding *mushaa,* or unpartitioned land, no sooner is one set of tenants or squatters satisfied than an Arab lawyer will present a claim in the name of a new set. Allegedly liberal Arabs abroad had better not attempt to create the specter of the Arab impoverished by the increase of Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Left alone, the Jewish majority of the future would treat the Arabs much better than the Arabs of Syria and Iraq are treating the Jews today. Mr. Khuri is poorly informed about the Zionist tendencies of the Jews in Arab countries. I have spoken to the Jews of Damascus; I have been in the cellar where they stealthily gather to give vent to their cravings for Zion. And I know what the Jews of Egypt and Iraq are doing.

With all due respect to Mr. Khuri and the liberal Arab gentlemen who are placating the American people, the Palestine Arabs are not yet ready for self-government, much less to govern a civilized, free-spoken, democratic people like the Jews. I do not trust Haj Ameen's guaranty of Jewish local autonomy, and no civilized and informed Christian would trust him. The Arab masses who "denounce the killing of innocent children, women and men" have not raised their voices sufficiently to make them audible.

Jewish needs on the European continent demand an open gateway to Palestine. Let us then hope that Britain will honestly carry out its obligations under the mandate while leaving the Jews and Arabs alone to work out their mutual relations.

A. S. ORLANS

New York, November 20

CONTRIBUTORS

CHARLES ABRAMS was formerly counsel to the New York City Housing Authority.

JOACHIM JOESTEN is a Swedish newspaperman.

LOUIS FISCHER has just arrived in New York for a visit.

W. H. AUDEN is the coauthor with Louis MacNeice of "Letters from Iceland." His Living Philosophy will be incorporated with the others in the series in a book to be published by Simon and Schuster some time next spring.

ALBERT LAUTERBACH is a former Viennese economist and journalist now in the United States.

ALFRED B. KUTTNER has contributed to the *New Republic,* the *Freeman,* the *Dial,* and the *Psychoanalytical Review.*

MARY McCARTHY is a frequent contributor to *The Nation.*

JULIAN BACH, JR., is on the staff of *Life.*

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